











# **RELIGIOUS EVOLUTION IN INDIA**

**Vol. I.**

**BY**

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To  
MY WIFE,

who while here watched with keen interest  
and warm enthusiasm the progress of  
this work and encouraged me  
with never-failing sympathy  
to persevere in the midst  
of many obstacles,  
this volume is lovingly dedicated.

*15th April, 1929.*



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# THE RELIGIOUS EVOLUTION IN INDIA.

## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION.

The nineteenth century discovered a great truth about the method of nature's working. Early in the latter half of the century two scientists of England independently discovered the fact, that nature developed her wonderful system by a gradual process of preserving the advantages and eliminating the defects in the course of a continuous struggle for existence. At first the application of this law was limited to the vegetable and animal kingdoms but by and by it was found that this law which came to be known as the Law of Evolution, pervaded the entire creation including human society. It was found that not only the animate world but all human concerns as well were subject to this great Law. Even religion, which had been looked upon as a revelation of God, has been recognised to be amenable to this law of slow and continuous development. Indeed, evolution may be said to be the method of God's working. At first there seemed to be a conflict between the advocates of religion and exponents of the Law of evolution but gradually good sense prevailed on both sides, and it has been realised, there need not be any conflict between the new conception of creation and revealed religion. Revelation of religious truths is a fact ; but it is, like all other works of God, a

continuous process. God has revealed his moral and spiritual truths to mankind by a long and continuous method of slow education and evolution. The great religions of our planet are as much amenable to the law of slow growth and evolution as the animal and vegetable kingdoms. This process of slow development, noticeable in all the historical religions of the world, can perhaps be most clearly traced in the religious history of India. Though India has no specific history of its own, in the extant literature of the country we find a wonderful record of religious development extending over a long series of centuries.

India has justly been called the mother of religions. In this land from the earliest dawn of civilisation, the human mind has pondered deep and long over the mystery of existence penetrating into some of the profoundest secrets of life. Here have been produced systems of philosophy and religion which are among the richest treasures of the human mind. From here, have passed waves of intellectual and spiritual movements which have profoundly affected the progress of the world's civilisation and which shall perhaps mould the intellectual and spiritual life of humanity still more deeply in the future. Here were born, sages and saints whose lives and teachings shall ever remain among the most precious heritage of our race, and in this ancient land, have under the providence of God, met and mingled together the streams of all the important religious cultures of the world giving birth to a universal all-comprehensive religion which has been claimed to be the faith of future humanity. This glorious vision flashed into my mind, one day, while I was looking for the subject of an address in a town in

Southern India in the course of a mission tour over twenty years ago. I saw in the wonderful history of India, in a panorama as it were, the gradual unfolding of the profound spiritual development of humanity. The notorious multiplicities of faiths and cults and philosophies of India no longer seemed to me vain, useless and disjointed but shone with a profound divine purpose running through them. It seems to me that in this wonderful land truly called the 'land of religions'—the self-revealing God has been gradually revealing his saving truth for humanity in an ever-progressive revelation. Ever since, I have pondered over this fascinating theme and the vision has grown brighter and clearer and the faith has grown deeper in my mind, that it is the providence of God which has thus been developing "His far-off divine purpose" in this land. On the plains of India has been unfolding a drama of divine revelation which, however dim at present, shall, I am confident, be clear as the noon-day light one day. Here is the central current of the spiritual life of humanity with its source in the dim far-off past of the vedic ages. There might have been streams of religious thought, in dimmer past in other regions but these were dried up and did not have a continued existence in a living culture, while the current which had its origin in Vedas, went on swelling and deepening, and was fed by many tributaries as it marched onwards through successive ages.

The vedic religion was a natural joyous outpouring of praise and prayer to the gods, who were dimly realised, as existing behind the phenomena of nature. The composers of the Vedic hymns, saw gods in the luminous Sun in the sky, in the dark clouds which poured life-giving water on earth, in the mysterious

elements of fire, so serviceable to man and yet so terrible, and burst forth in songs of praise, offered sacrifices to propitiate them and prayed for health and long life, children and cattle in return. At first they saw different gods in different groups of natural phenomena, but with progress of knowledge and deeper insight they realised that all these phenomena in heaven and earth were but manifestations of one indwelling power. This vision dimly seen towards the close of the Vedic age grew into a clear and shinning light in the Upanishads. The transition of the' politheistic naturalism of the Vedas into sublime monotheism of the Upanishads, is clear and natural. In the Vedic times the Aryan mind was yet in its infancy, and had not yet learnt to turn within. The mind was impressed with the grandeur of the external world. But by the time of the Upanishads, it was the grandeur of the inner world which stirred the Aryan mind more deeply. The great German Philosopher Immanuel Kant declared in the 18th century :—"Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the oftener and more steadily we reflect on them : the starry heavens above and the moral law within." But the sages of India at least as early as the sixth century B. C., clearly enunciated the majesty of the inner and the outer world. The Rishis of the Vedas saw the revelation of God in the outer world but the sages of the Upanishads marvelled at the mystery of the human mind even more deeply. They realised one indwelling person in the heavens above and in the human soul within. यशायमस्मिकावाग्मि तेजोमयोऽनृतमयः पुरुषः (Brihadaranyaka II-v-10). "He that glorious Immortal Person who is in the heavens." यशायमस्मिकावाग्मि तेजोमयो-

ॐतमयः पुरुषः (II-v-14) "He that glorious Immortal Person who is in this Soul." Thus we have in the Upanishads a sublime monotheism, a conception of God pervading the universe, an indwelling presence which has become clear in western thought only in more recent times and has been spoken of as the Immanent conception.

The monotheism of the Upanishads is a natural outcome of the preceding thought and practice of the Rig Veda through the Brahmanas. In the Vedas, we have seen, the Rishis saw the gods in the various natural phenomena and worshipped them with offerings. This process continued for a long time and became gradually more complex. Various forms of sacrifices sprang up in course of time and a complicated system of worship and liturgy requiring the services of several orders of priests was developed. The religion of the Upanishads was a development and a protest against the Vedic religion both in principle and practice. In principle it enunciated the Spiritual Monotheism of one God "who is in the fire, who is in water, who dwells in the entire universe," "the glorious Immortal Person who is in the heavens, the glorious Immortal Person who is in the Soul." In practice it substituted for the complicated sacrifices, the *Brahmajnana*, knowledge of God. The Upanishads exposed the futility of sacrifices and declared that by knowing the indwelling God alone man can attain immortality. तमेव विदिवातिष्ठुमेति नाम्यः पत्ना विद्यते-इयनाय । (Swetasvatara Upanishad, III. 8). "By knowing Him alone one reaches Immortality. There is no other path of going (there)."

In the following epoch we find a still further develop-

ment which is again a double protest against the ceremonialism of the Vedas and the *Brahmajnana* of the Upanishads. Just as the Vedic worship led to ceremonialism of the Brahmanas, the *Brahmajnana* of the Upanishads degenerated into idle metaphysical speculations. This explains the rise of the great Buddha who, even more impressed with the evil of "metaphysical views" than the ceremonialism of the Vedic religion, enunciated his gospel of love and service. Buddha saw that while the common people groaned under a burden of a complicated mass of sacrifices and ceremonies, the learned deluded themselves with vain speculations about the nature of God and Soul ; and he exhorted both to turn to the real religion of life and conduct. Thus arose the grand religion of love and service, which for a time, seemed to reign supreme throughout the length and breadth of India, and gradually penetrated into the farthest corners of Asia. The success of Buddhism was amazing and must have been due as much to the personality and sacrifices of Buddha and his followers, as to the needs of the time. Buddhism proclaimed the great message of love and service, which embraced all creation including dumb animals. On the one hand, it protested against the uselessness of external ceremonies and inveighed against the wickedness of slaughtering innocent animals in the name of religion, and on the other, it exposed the futility of the idle speculations of the schools of philosophies. Turning aside from both, Buddha and his followers exhorted people to purify their hearts, conquer their passions, and to love and serve all creatures. The success of this simple gospel was phenomenal. For a time, Hinduism seemed to have been swept away before

the flood of the rising tide of the new religion. But the triumph of Buddhism was temporary. After a few centuries of magnificent career it was swept out of India almost completely, though it has moulded the religious life of the country permanently. The downfall of Buddhism in India is as interesting as was its rise, and requires careful investigation. Whatever other causes it might or might not have, its non-theistic character, its anti-social outlook and its cold philosophy must have been repugnant to the devotional temperament and warm heart of the nation.

This led to a further remarkable development in the religious history of the country, namely the growth of the *Bhakti* School. Soon after the rise of Buddhism, there appeared a new movement which not satisfied with mere ceremonies or bare knowledge of God, or even love and service of humanity, longed for love of, and personal relationship with God. Herein was the genesis of the *Bhakti* movement, which with the monotheism of the Upanishads may be said to be the chief glory and the permanent contribution of the spiritual genius of the Indian Nation. Indeed, the *Bhakti* School of India is a most precious heritage of humanity, which has not yet received proper recognition. It gradually developed in all its grandeur and beauty in various parts of the country. There was a large literature and many remarkable teachers, who became founders of cognate but independent sects. Perhaps the fullest and finest expression of the *Bhakti* movement was in the life of Sri Chaitanya, who flourished in Bengal towards the beginning of the sixteenth Century of the Christian Era.

But the *Bhakti* movement, had its limitations like its

predecessors. The bane of Indian religious movements was their one-sidedness. The *Brahmajnana* of the Upanishads was dissociated from love and service and was degenerated into cold, dry, speculation of the schools. The service of humanity of Buddhism was dissociated from faith in and love of God and was turned into mere mechanical heartless action. So also the *Bhakti* movement was dissociated from knowledge and service and was thus transformed into blind, irrational, superstitious sentimentalism. The advocates of the *Bhakti* movement, in their eagerness for a personal God turned to the worship of men and elements. The Infinite Unseen Spirit God—the *Paramatman* of the Upanishads, was cast aside and the worship of concrete material things of various forms, finer phantastic, was resorted to. Thus arose idolatry and the doctrine of Incarnation—the two great evils of later Hinduism. The devotees of the *Bhakti* School, in their warm advocacy of *Bhakti* dispensed with, discouraged, and even denounced knowledge. Dissociated from knowledge, the movement gradually degenerated into a mass of gross, irrational superstition. Similarly in their eagerness for extolling *Bhakti*, service was also neglected and love was reduced to mere sentimentalism. At this dark period of the religious History of India a new and unforeseen element was introduced into it.

So long, the development or decay was from within, but now a mighty outside influence enters into the spiritual drama of the country. In the ninth and tenth centuries of the Christian era, Islam, in its rushing career of conquest entered India, and the country came under the sway of Muhammadan influence.

The Muhammadan conquest, so disastrous on the

material fortune of the country, had a very salubrious influence on the religious development of India. For the first time, India came into close and vital contact with the Semetic culture of the west. Just as a mighty current of spiritual culture was developing in India from the Vedic age, so an equally important current of spiritual life was developing in Western Asia from the days of Moses. The Semetic current of spirituality, springing from Judaism, was gradually developing in Palestine, and subsequently in Arabia in the form of Islam. Finally, under the inscrutable providence of God, it was brought into India, and mingled with the existing current of Hinduism, correcting its aberrations and supplementing its defects.

One of the foremost results of the Muhammadan influence on Indian religious development was the insistence on the unity of Godhead. The Indian sages had indeed realised and proclaimed a very sublime type of Monotheism. But with their philosophical temperament they lacked the insisting spirit of devotion to one God alone. Along with their profession of faith in the one Supreme Spirit, were associated belief in and worship of many Gods and incarnations. Islam, with the uncompromising semetic spirit, insisted on the worship of one God and one God alone. With its categorical demand of "Thou shalt" or "shalt not", it came into direct conflict with the soft, tolerant temperament of the Hindus. After a period of sharp conflict, Hinduism with its wonderful genius of absorption and adaptation, assimilated what was best in the Muhammadan culture. There sprang up a succession of religious teachers who emphasised the Unity of God, and various reforming movements were initiated in different parts of the country. Some of these set up

permanent church organisations, and tried to build up communities on reformed lines.

Another important consequence of Muhammadan influence on Indian religious life, was the recognition of the dignity of human life. The Indian life was avowedly based on the principle of inequality of men. Society was divided into innumerable castes, sects, and sub-sects. Islam, in direct contrast with it, proclaimed and practised the brotherhood of man. A large and flourishing community established on the principle of equality of man, could not but produce a permanent impression in the country. A large section of the lower classes were converted into Muhammadanism. Hinduism was compelled, though very grudgingly, to yield to the democratic influence of Muhammadanism. The reformers enunciated the principle of the dignity of manhood. They proclaimed that the real greatness of a man depended on his virtues and not on his birth. They boldly declared that a *Chandal* (the lowest caste) is superior to a *Brahmin* if he is devoted to God. Many of the great reformers were themselves men of low birth, and some of them were even Muhammadans.

But even Iconoclastic Islam failed to eradicate idol-worship and caste distinction of Hinduism. Perhaps it had not sufficient moral force and cultural background for that stupendous task, or perhaps the time had not yet come. A still further and wider synthesis was necessary. This was supplied by the introduction of Christianity and European culture in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. India came into direct contact with the west in the sixteenth century and Christian missionaries were not long in turning their attention to the rich fields of

India. In a few centuries Christian missionaries carried the messages of Christianity to every part of India. With the establishment of British rule, India came under the sway of Western culture. On the historic plains of India, met now all the currents of religion, culture, and civilization as they did nowhere else. Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity met and mingled in direct and close contact with each other. India was the chosen land and the nineteenth century the far-off time, where divine Providence accomplished its purpose. To the eye of faith, the finger of God, is evident. There was nothing in the outward circumstances to indicate the nearness of such a momentous event in the history of humanity. India was then in the lowest depth of humiliation in her history. The Mogul Empire had broken down and British rule was not yet quite established. Confusion and lawlessness was prevalent everywhere. Profound darkness enveloped the country. People had forgotten the rich heritage of Philosophy and literature of ancient India. Western scientific education was not yet introduced. Culture was at the lowest ebb. The descendants of the Rishis of the Upanishads were grovelling in crude idolatry and superstition. Inhuman social customs reigned triumphant.

In the midst of such unpromising surroundings, in a small village of Bengal, was born a man to whom was revealed a conception of Universal Religion, the broadest and largest that has been yet vouchsafed to human race. It cannot be explained otherwise than as a dispensation of the inscrutable providence of God, such as was the birth of Jesus Christ in a village of Palestine, among a despised race, at the darkest moment of their history. Ram

Mohun Roy, who has been universally acknowledged as the father of Modern India, is also the Apostle of the New Ideal of the age. He was truly the messenger of God. Providence seems to have chosen and carefully prepared him as the prophet of Universal Religion in this new age. Born a Brahmin, he was early acquainted with the Quoran and Islamic culture and later in life, by his own exertions, he was versed in Christian Theology and western scientific culture, a profound Sanskrit scholar, he was also a master in Arabic and Persian, and learnt Greek and Hebrew to study the Bible in the original. He was justly called a Hindu, *Pandit Jabardast Mohvi* and a Christian *padri*. He was also well acquainted with, and profoundly enthusiastic about modern scientific spirit. Thus trained and equipped, he directed his massive intellect and extraordinary acumen to the study of religious problems for which he had peculiar facilities, surrounded as he was by Hindu, Buddhistic, Muhammadan and Christian culture. It is even said that in his early manhood he went to Tibet to study the condition of Buddhism in that country. He travelled extensively in India and came in contact with *Sanyasis* and religious teachers of various sects. Thus he was closely acquainted with the literature and life of all the important historical religions of the world, and saw a vision of Universal religion in which all distinctions of caste, colour, age, nationality, would be merged into one church with God as the father of all and all human beings as brothers.

All religious teachers of different ages and climes were messengers of the One Eternal Father, and all scriptures of East and West were to be the common

heritage of that Universal religion. The Vedas and Avesta, the Bible and the Quoran, indeed all truths, whatever might be their source or origin, were the revelation of God. Early in life, Rammohun Roy, conceived this grand ideal and steadily prepared himself for its propagation. With this object in view, he retired from worldly avocations and settled down in Caleutta, the rising capital of British India in 1814. He soon put himself into communication with earnest men among Hindus, Muhammadans and Christians. Slowly he endeavoured to form a band of religious inquirers and worshippers who would seek the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. After nearly fifteen years of earnest labours, in August 1828, he established the first congregation for the spiritual worship of the One Eternal God, without any distinction of cast, colour and creed and nearly two years later, built and consecrated the first *Mandir* or building for the housing of this Congregation, which came to be known as the Brahma Samaj. Raja Rammohun Roy has been variously claimed as a Hindu, a Muhamminadan and a Christian. But the religion, he proclaimed and preached was neither Hinduism nor Muhammadanism nor Christianity. Or it might be called purest Hinduism, true Christianity and pure Islam. To him, a Janaka or a Yajnavalkya, Buddha or Jesus or a Muhammad or a Chaitanya was equally a guide to peace or Truth. He found inspiration as well from the Quoran and the Bible as from the Hindu scriptures. His was Universal Theism, the religion of the new age, in which all barriers of country, colour, age and nationality were to be dissolved. This was the far off event, towards which whole humanity was tending. The various faiths

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and cultures, sects and churches, met and mingled together on the historic plains of India in the dispensation of God. It seems to me, that the Providence of God was preparing the ground through ages, in the midst of all the vicissitudes in the fate of the Nation. Current after current of human culture came and mingled here like the streams and rivers flowing down from the feet of the great Himalaya, and meeting on the fertile plains below. I have tried in the following pages to trace the development of this divine purpose as best as I could. I am fully conscious of the stupendous task and am well-aware of the imperfections of the achievement. It is inevitable that I could touch only the fringe of this vast subject and briefly indicate the various links of the mighty chain of the religious development of humanity. I hope and trust future students of history and religion, will work out this interesting theme in detail, and with greater fullness.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE VEDAS.

The story of the religious development in India is to be gathered mainly from the extant religious literature of the country. The earliest religious literature of India, that has come down to us is the Vedas. They are considered to be the most sacred scriptures of the nation. The date of their composition cannot be definitely fixed. But they must have been of great antiquity and of different periods. For a long time they remained scattered among different *groups* of the Aryan settlers in India. The art of writing, according to all authorities, is of a comparatively later origin in India. The *Mantras* or hymns of the Rig-Veda, the earliest of the four Vedas, had been composed long before the art of writing became known in India. For a considerable time the hymns of Rig-Veda were preserved orally handed down by the teachers to the disciples from generation to generation. Indeed the reduction of the Vedic *Mantras* into writing is a work of recent date. Even now the orthodox method of learning them is from the mouth of qualified teachers and not from written texts.

The tradition that has gained such a firm hold on the Indian mind that the Vedas are not human compositions but revelations from God, indicate that the *Mantras* of the Vedas were not collected with their present form until long after their composition, when their authorship and origin was fairly forgotten. The

present tradition that the four Vedas were originally revealed to four Rishis, and afterwards Vyasa classified and arranged them in their present form, is very superficial, and must have been gradually evolved during a long period of little acquaintance with the actual text. But behind it there is this kernel of truth that the Mantras of the Vedas, which had been composed by different persons at different places and in different times, were collected and arranged in their present form at a certain time by a certain person or more probably by a group of persons. Who this person was, or when this great work was accomplished cannot be ascertained ; but the tradition of the classification of the Vedas is substantially correct. There can be no doubt that the Vedic *Mantras* long remained scattered among the various groups of Aryan settlers in India. They were composed by different persons at different periods, and were preserved by the descendants and disciples of the original composers. The tradition of divine origin in its liberal sense could not have originated except in an age of uncritical and blind veneration and possibly of a falling off in the actual acquaintance with the text. For apart from all considerations of reason and experience, the hymns themselves bear unquestionable marks of human authorship. In the texts of many of the hymns the names of the authors are mentioned. For instance, the last verse of the sixty-second hymn of the first *Mandala* of the Rig Veda says, "O Indra, Nudha, the son of Gotama has composed, for us, this new hymn of thine." The last verse of the 39th hymn of the second *Mandala* concludes with the statement that "Gritsa-

mada has composed this new hymn of praise for the glorification of the Aswinis". The sixth verse of the twenty-third hymn of the tenth Mandala of the Rig-Veda says "Oh Indra, the Vimadas have composed this new beautiful hymn in honour of thee." Such references to the authors are innumerable in the Vedic *Mantras*. The Rishis of the Vedas used to mention their own names in the texts of the hymns of their composition as was the custom with the later bards and singers of India, even down to the present day. Nor can it be contended that the hymns were made known to the Rishis, for often they themselves say that these were new hymns, composed by them with great labour. "We have composed this hymn according to our knowledge and ability." R. V. I. I. 18. "**शक्तौ वा  
यत्ते चक्रम् विदा वा**" "As an expert wise artisan constructs a chariot, so have I composed this hymn of praise for thee, Agni" R. V. V. 2.11 "**एतं ते स्तोमं  
तुविजात विप्रो रथं न धौरः स्तपा अतच्च**" !

Thus as has been the case in every age and every clime, those among the Aryan settlers of India, who had the poetic gift, began to sing in measured strain. Whether these hymns had from the beginning a sacrificial purpose and origin may be considered doubtful. But it is evident that the poets were looked upon with great regard from an early date and their compositions were preserved with great care. In course of time there grew up well-known families or clans of poets and singers. Each family preserved the hymns composed by the poets among themselves as a precious heritage. Thus there were some collections of hymns each associated with the names of a few well-known Rishis, such as Vasistha,

Viswamitra, Vamdeva, Gritsamada, Atri, Bharadwaja, and Kanwa. Each of these collections existed separate for a long time. It is likely that at the beginning and for a long time each clan used the hymns of their own composition alone in their sacrifices. Gradually these collections became well-known among the various groups of the primitive settlers, and at least the best of them acquired a larger circulation. With the increasing solidarity and the growing consciousness of national unity, the entire poetical literature of the race came necessarily to be collected together, and thus was formed what has since been known as the Rig Veda.

But long before this, some of the hymns had been fixed for specific sacrificial purposes. Some hymns, for example were used as chants; some were sung while the sacrificial fire was being lighted; some were sung while the Soma juice was prepared and dressed. Thus there grew up special collections for special purposes. The verses that were sung as chants were called Samas; and in course of time a number of poems were selected and set apart for singing; these constituted the Sama Veda. Another group of poems came to be used as recitations in connection with the various sacrifices; these were called the Yajus. Of course, the formation of those collections must have taken a long time. Hymn after hymn was added to the group, till at last they attained their present form and dimension. The Rig Veda is the general collection of the early sacred literature of the Aryans, that were deemed worth preserving, and it is admitted to be the earliest of the four Vedas. But that does not mean that the compilation of the Rig Veda or the composition of its component hymns had been completed

before the commencement of the other Vedas. The formation of the several Vedas must have been going on simultaneously to some extent, though of course one may have been commenced earlier, and another continued for some time after the others had been closed. In the Rig Veda we find mention of the name Sama. "May he (Indra) hear the Sama being sung" VIII. 81. 5. "To Him the Samas go" (यो जागार तम् सामानि यंति V. 44. 14.) These prove that before the closure of the Rig Veda, some hymns were specially known as Samas. It is probable that the compilation of the Rig Veda, was simultaneous with that of the Sama Veda and the Yajurveda at least.

Now turning to the Rig Veda, which contains the greater part of the hymns of the Sama Veda and also a considerable part of the Yajur Veda, it had perhaps no specific sacrificial purpose. It was a general collection of the entire poetical literature of the Aryans. There are altogether a little over ten thousand poems of an average of ten verses each. In the texts that have come down to us we find two different classifications, one of ten books called the *Mandalas*, and the other of eight books called the *Ashtakas*. Each *Ashtaka* is again subdivided into eight chapters, which are again divided into a number of *Vargas*. The *Mandalas* are divided into a number of single poems called the *Suktas*. The division into *Mandalas* and *Suktas* follows a certain definite purpose, which we shall have to notice presently, and is thoroughly scientific. But the division into *Ashtakas* and chapters does not yield to any scientific principle. The Chapters and *Ashtakas* begin and end quite at random without having any underlying

purpose or principle. The division into *Mandalas* is evidently the earlier of the two. The question arises why in the previous, or at least side by side existence of the scientific classification of the *Mandalas*, there should arise the utterly unscientific classification of the *Ashtakas* and Chapters. The only answer that suggests to me is that the classification into *Ashtakas* was made for the mechanical purpose of a convenient division for committing the verses into memory. The *Mandalas* are very unequal in length. The first *Mandala*, for instance, is about four times the length of the second *Mandala*, and three times the size of the third *Mandala*. The Vedas were, we know, for a long time learnt and preserved by committing to memory. And for that purpose it would be convenient to have divisions of equal portions. The *Ashtakas* are more regular in length. The division into *Ashtakas* and Chapters, however, is also very old. It was adopted by Kātyayana, who lived about 300 B.C. We shall adhere to the more ancient and scientific division of *Mandalas* and *Suktas* in our references.

The division into *Mandalas* is based on considerations of authorship. Seven of the ten *Mandalas* from the second to the eighth, purport to be each the work of a single Rishi, or a single family, viz., the second *Mandala* of *Gritsamada*, third of *Viswamitra*, fourth of *Vamdeva* fifth of *Atri*, a sixth of *Brihashpati* family, seventh of *Vasishta*, and the eighth of *Kanwa*. The remaining three *Mandalas* are the works of various Rishis. The ninth *Mandala* has a unity of subject matter ; it is a collection of hymns on Soma by various Rishis. The first and the tenth *Mandala* have unity of neither authorship nor subject

matter. They have been grouped together at random. It would appear that these were later collections of stray hymns that had not been included in the earlier *Mandalas* either because of their later origin or some other causes. The seven homogeneous *Mandalas* which have been called the Family *Mandalas*, on account of their having been composed and preserved by particular families, probably existed as complete and separate treatises for a considerable time before the final compilation of the Rig Veda. It is likely that at first each family or clan used for sacrificial purposes the hymns of their own composition entirely or mainly at least. The Family *Mandalas* are complete in themselves, each commencing with a few hymns on *Agni*, followed by some hymns on *Indra*, and containing at least a few hymns on each of the chief deities of the Vedic Pantheon. This is the uniform order of arrangement in all the nine *Mandalas*, the ninth *Mandala* being entirely composed of Soma hymns. Thus each of the Family *Mandalas* was a perfect whole unmistakably indicating a separate existence either as a literary production or as a sacrificial manual.

As regards the ninth *Mandala*, Prof. Macdonell considers that it "came into being as a collection after the first eight books had been combined into a whole." But I would venture to think that opposite was the case. At the time of the compilation of the family books, the Soma book must have some sort of coherent existence. The ground on which Prof. Macdonell considers the compilation of the Soma hymns later is that these hymns were composed by the authors of the same families as produced Books II-VII. He therefore argues : "When

the hymns of the different families were combined into books, and clearly not till then, all their Pavamana (Soma) hymns were taken out and gathered into a single collection." But these facts seem to me to warrant the opposite conclusion that the Soma hymns must have had some kind of a separate collective existence, otherwise they would have been grouped with the other compositions of their authors. It is extremely probable and quite natural that Soma sacrifice being one of the earliest and in earlier times at any rate the most important of the socio-religious institutions of the Aryans, the hymns connected with it came into prominence and were gathered together in one collection at an early date. Later on when the general collection was made the compilers did not venture to split up the Soma hymns to arrange them along with the other compositions of the same authors, but kept them together as a distinct *Mandala*. As a collection, therefore, I would place the ninth *Mandala* at the beginning rather than towards the end. This of course does not apply to the individual hymns, some of the hymns of the other Books being of as early or even an earlier date.

It would be a very stupendous task and would take us too far away from our main purpose, to endeavour to fix even the relative dates of the various portions of the Rig Veda. All that we require for our present purpose is to fix in our mind firmly that the Rig Veda was not a product of one period. The composition of the ten thousand and odd hymns constituting the Rig Veda must have extended over a long period—possibly some centuries; and that some of these came to be collected together earlier, and

some later. We have seen that the ninth book probably existed in a collective form earlier than the rest. The first and the tenth *Mandalas* were undoubtedly later collection. Both the language and the ideas unmistakably indicate a later origin.

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## CHAPTER III.

### THE SOCIAL CONDITION IN THE AGE OF THE RIG VEDA.

For a proper understanding of the religious ideas of the Rig Veda it will be necessary to have a glance at the general condition of the people in the midst of whom these ideas were developed. The hymns of the Rig Veda supply us with ample materials for reconstructing a fair picture of the Aryan society in the Vedic age. We are at once confronted with a community of eager, joyous, hopeful people in the exuberance of early youth. A keen delight in life pervades the entire Rig Veda. As yet the deeper and sadder problems of existence have not cast their shadow on the mind of the race. The society was as yet evidently in the early stage of simplicity. There was an abundant supply of the necessities of life all around; the struggle for existence had not yet become keen. To the people who composed the hymns of the Rig Veda, life was a blessing. There are obvious marks of joy and sunshine in all their utterances. Nature wore to them a smiling countenance. There were fertile plains, broad rivers, and luxuriant vegetation around them. There must have been mountains of fair height with useful trees and creepers within easy reach. The weather was sunny with regular seasons.

The exact place where the hymns of the Rig Veda were composed may not be authoritatively pointed out; but there cannot be any doubt that the major portion of them must have been first sung in the tract of land

watered by the Indus and its tributaries. There are frequent mentions of the seven rivers, the *Sapta-Sindhu*. These seven rivers unmistakably include the Indus and its five tributaries, which have given the name to the modern Punjab. *Sindhu*, the ancient name of the Indus constantly recurs in the Rig Veda. Indeed, the *Sindhu* was the most important river with the Aryans of the Rig Veda. They extolled the *Sindhu* above all other rivers. In the seventy-fifth hymn of the tenth *Mandala* several rivers are mentioned by name. Among these the *Sindhu* is given the highest place. “प्रसूत्वरोणामति सिंधुरोजमा।” The glory of the *Sindhu* is high above all other rivers. The place of the *Sindhu* was so undisputed among the rivers, that *Sindhu* became the general name for rivers. The Ganges, which later on became the chief among the rivers both in religious literature and popular imagination, had as yet not come into prominence at all. Her tributary, the Yamuna which in *Pauranic* times occupied the second place among the rivers of India in popular veneration, was also in the background. In the whole of the Rig Veda, the Ganges is mentioned once, and the Yamuna thrice ; [V. 52. 17, VII. 18. 19., X. 75. 5.] whereas the *Sindhu* and its tributaries are constantly referred to throughout the Rig Veda. This is a conclusive evidence that the Vedic community dwelt in the neighbourhood of the *Sindhu* and its tributaries, which were then known as *Sutudri*, *Parushni*, *Asikni*, *Aryakia* and *Vetasa*. Of these *Sutudri* is still called *Satadru* and is the Sutlej of modern Geography. Yaska identifies *Parushni* with the Iravati and *Aryakia* with the Bipasa or the Beas ; *Asakni* is the Chenab, *Vetasa* is

the Jhelum. The only other name which approaches the Sindhu in importance in the Rig Veda is the *Saraswati*. It is difficult to ascertain which river was meant by this name. None of the existing rivers of India is known as the *Saraswati*. But a tradition calls a river flowing underground between the Ganges and the Yamuna as *Saraswati*. This may have its origin in the mention of Saraswati in the Rig Veda. As the later geographers could not find any river of the name of *Saraswati*, they held that the *Saraswati* had disappeared and was flowing underground. It is also quite possible that there was actually a river of the name *Saraswati*, which has subsequently disappeared owing to natural causes. Some suppose that *Saraswati* was a name of the Indus; but that interpretation is vitiated by the fact that the name *Saraswati* is mentioned along with the *Sindhu*. The rare mention of the Ganges and the Yamuna indicates that the Aryans had, by the time when those hymns were composed extended farther east to the vicinity of those rivers. Two other names of rivers known in modern times are mentioned, the *Sarayu* and the *Gomati*; but it is not likely that the Aryans had extended as far as the borders of the modern *Sarayu* and *Gomati*; they must have been the names of some small rivers in the plains of the Panjab. Sayana interprets *Gomati* as a synonym for river from *Go* water. But in any case the *Gomati* was undoubtedly in the Punjab, as in the sixth verse of the seventy-fifth hymn of the tenth Mandala it is expressly said the Indus united the *Gomati* and the *Kramu* with the *Kuva* and the *Mehatnu*. Whatever, it may be, the constant and frequent mention of the seven rivers leaves no doubt that the hymns of the Rig Veda were

mostly composed in the tract of land drained by the Indus and its tributaries.

Another consideration leads us to the same conclusion. The Soma plant occupied a prominent place in the Vedic society. Not only was it an essential ingredient in the sacrifices, it was a favourite common drink. The hymns of the Rig Veda show that it was an article of everyday use. The Soma was a herb which grew only on mountains. "This Soma clad with leaves and foliage dwells on the central mountains of the earth. ix. 82.3." "O Soma, thy birth-place is in the heaven. Thence thy limbs were cast on the mountains, where they have grown up as trees. ix. 79.4." "These Soma creepers having grown on mountainous regions, are being distilled on sacrificial ground, which is the meeting place of the gods. ix. 46.1." So the people who composed the Vedic hymns must have lived in a locality close by some mountains. The Soma sacrifice which was the principal religious rite of the Vedic Hindus gradually fell into disuse till at last the plant was forgotten. We do not find any mention of it in the later religious literature, so much so that the very identity of the plant was lost and was substituted. This great change could have been due to the lack of the supply of the plant. As the Aryans moved on to the Gangetic plains, farther and farther away from the Himalayan range, it became more and more difficult to get a supply of the Soma herb of the mountains, till at last it altogether disappeared from the religious and social life of the people. All these unmistakably indicate that the Vedic hymns were composed on the plains of the Punjab near the Hindukush at the foot of the Himalayan range.

Here the Aryans must have dwelt for a considerable period, gradually extending farther and farther to the east and south with the natural increase of population and pressure of new arrivals. Life was easy and comfortable, except for the conflict with the indigenous inhabitants of the land. It is obvious that the Vedic people were confronted with an alien race, whom they called the *Dasyus*. There are innumerable references in the Rig Veda to the conflict between the Aryans and the indigenous people upon whom the new-comers looked down with contempt. "All around us are the Dasyu tribes ; they do not perform sacrifices ; they have no faith ; their rites are different. They are not to be considered as men. O thou destroyer of enemies ( Indra ), do thou kill them, destroy the Dasyu tribes." अकर्मा दस्युरभि नो अमंतुरन्यब्रतो अमानुषः । त्वं तस्यामिद्रहन्वधर्दीसस्य दंभय ॥ x. 22.8.

These were a race of darker complexion. The Aryans who had a fair complexion often alluded to the colour of their adversaries with contempt and even called them as the blacks. "*Dasyu*" and "Darky" were the commonest epithets applied to them in the Rig Veda. "Give praise unto Soma, who with splendour marches swiftly like water, killing the dark-skinned people." "ज्ञातः छाणामप त्वचं" ix. 41.1. "Indra hated these dark-skinned people." "इद्व द्विष्टामप धर्मंति मायया त्वचमसिक्षो भूमनो दिवसरि ।" ix. 73.5. One pretext for the contempt of these people was that they did not observe the Aryan ceremonies. In the Rig Veda they are often taunted as men "without worship or praise" and "without sacrifice". The Aryans with all the arrogance and narrowness of fanatics could not consider that there

could be any other faith except their own. We have already seen that they could not consider indigenous races as men because their rites were different. Later on they were called *Rakshasas* or demons. And yet these people do not seem to have been far behind their successful conquerors in civilisation. The only account which has come down to us regarding these indigenous races of India is from their Aryan adversaries ; but even these prove them to have made considerable progress in civilisation. They were no mean adversaries for the proud Aryans. The struggle between the two races for the sovereignty of the land was a long and arduous one. The non-Aryans fought with weapons, horses and chariots. They had fortified cities. Their cities are several times described in the Rig Veda as made of iron. One of their Kings, Sambasa, is said to have ninety-nine strong cities, which were captured and destroyed by an Arya king Dibodas with the help of Indra. There are frequent references to this in the Rig Veda as a wonderful feat of arms. They had cattle ; the art of tilling land was not unknown to them. They seem to have also learnt the use of metal and extracted precious metals from underneath the earth.

It was only after a long and arduous struggle that the indigenous inhabitants of the land submitted to the Aryans. The war was a cruel and sanguinary one. From the epithets which the Aryans applied to their adversaries we can well understand that the conquerors had no tender feelings towards the vanquished. The feeling must have been very bitter on both sides. It was a war to the knife. And when the few remnants of the exhausted enemies surrendered, the Aryans did not mete

out to them any generous terms. They were treated almost as beasts. The word *Dasa* became the name for domestic slaves.

The conquered adversaries proved themselves very useful in the work of tilling the land and other forms of manual labour; and soon they became a valuable clement in personal property. We find that the Rishis prayed for a large retinue of *Dasas* along with other forms of property. In course of time by their industry, faithfulness, serviceableness, these unfortunate people improved their lot a little, but still they remained outside the pale of the Aryan society, and were looked down as inferior order of beings. They were considered to have been born to serve and minister to the comforts of the fair complexioned people. The Gods had destined them to be low. “यो दासं वर्णमधरं गुह्यकः” “Who (Indra) has made the *Dasas* inferior and losely placed” II. 12.4. The land had been reserved by Providence for the Aryans. The wholesale and absolute confiscation of the land of the conquered people was sanctioned by divine oracle. Indra is made to declare, as in the second verse of the twenty-sixth hymn of the fourth Mandala, that the land naturally belonged to the Aryans. “अहं भूमिमददामार्याहं हृष्टि दाशुषे मर्लाय” “I have given the land to the Aryans, I have given rain to men who offered sacrifices. The land belongs to the Aryans as naturally as the rains come down upon earth.”

But, it was long before the Aryans could subjugate the indigenous people to this abject position. Before that they had to fight many a battle. The Rig Veda is as much a collection of sacrificial hymns as of battle hymns.

Quite a large proportion of hymns are invocations to Indra and other Gods for aid and victory in battle against the Non-Aryans. It is evident that the military operations occupied a large place in the Vedic community. The art of fighting was fairly well-developed among the Aryan people. Their chief weapon was bow and arrows. The arrows were made with wooden shafts tipped with iron heads and supplied with wings of feather. Manufacture of arrows seems to have been a regular lucrative industry. “जरतीभिरोषधैभिः पर्णभिः शकुनानां । कामरि अशमभिर्युभिर्हरणवंतमिळतीद्रायेदो परि स्व ॥” IX. 112. 2. “The blacksmith having made arrows with the help of dry wood, feathers of birds and shining stones for making points, looks for some wealthy purchaser.” There is also mention of sword in the Rig Veda. In the seventy-fifth hymn of the sixth *Mandala* we get a complete description of the paraphernalia of a warrior. It consisted of a bow, a case for arrows, which used to hung over the shoulder. The warrior had a protective armour which was called *Varma*. It is not quite clear whether it was made of skin or some metal ; it evidently covered the greater part of the body ; it is spoken of as being “put on” at the time of the battle. Kings and important personages fought in a chariot drawn by horses driven by a charioteer. Chariots were the ordinary conveyances for the upper classes. It is frequently mentioned in the Rig Veda ; and the construction of chariots was a prominent profession requiring skill and courage. The arrows were, at least, occasionally poisoned. “We salute the great goddess arrow, which is poisoned, whose head is destructive, whose mouth is of iron” “आलाका या रुद्धीर्षग्यो यसा अयोमुखं । इदं पर्जन्यरेतस इव देव्यै द्विष्टमः ॥” VI. 75. 15.

The use of horses in battle was also common. “समव्य-  
पर्णाचरति नो नरोऽस्माकमिद्र रथिनो जयंतु vi. 47. 31.” “Our  
leaders are marching on horses. O Indra ! may our  
charioteers be victorious.” Horses were employed for  
quick and difficult march. “यदिंद्र सर्गे अर्वतसोदयासे महाधने ।  
असमने अधनि हृजिने पथि श्येनां इव अवस्थातः ॥” VI. 46. 13.  
“On occasions of great battle do thou send our horses  
over uneven roads like swift hawks seeking flesh in diffi-  
cult places. Horses were trained for military marches.  
“Who like well-trained horses (*वाजिनो मितद्रवः*) march  
in regular steps” x. 64. 6. Some sort of commissariat  
must have been developed. Even horses were provided with  
fodder in battle fields. “सिषासतु रथोणां वाजेष्वर्वतामिव । भरेषु  
जिगुप्तामसि” ix. 47. 5. “As grass is distributed to  
horses in battle-field, do thou distribute the riches (of the  
vanquished enemies) to the conquerors.” Sieges of forti-  
fied places were often undertaken. Some sort of fortifi-  
cations were also known.

Forts (दुर्गः) are mentioned not unfrequently. It is  
very significant that military extravagances such as  
abound in the *Puranas* are not at all to be found in the  
Rig Veda. Military operations were actual experiences  
of almost everyday life in the Vedic age and not  
imaginary myths.

The chief adversaries of the composers of the Vedic  
hymns were the indigenous inhabitants of the land. But  
before the close of the Vedic age the Aryans had begun to  
fight among themselves. In the tenth Mandala of the  
Rig Veda we find many references to the intervened wars  
among the Aryans. “यो नो दास आर्यो वा पुरष्टुतादेव इदं  
युधये चकीतति” x. 38. 3. “Whoever desires to fight with  
us be he a *Dasa* or be he an Aryan,” अस्य जिधीसलो

वचमिंद्रभिदासतः । दासस वा मधवर्यस्य वा सगुतयंवया  
वधौ ॥ x. 102. 3. "O Indra, do thou strike thy thunder-  
bolt on our enemies desirous of killing us. Do thou  
destroy them secretly, be they *Dasas* or Aryans."

But though circumstances compelled the Aryans to resort to arms frequently and to cultivate the art of fighting carefully, they were essentially an agricultural people. Cattle were their chief wealth ; there are frequent prayers for the increase of cattle in the Vedic hymns. Earlier still the Aryans had mainly been a pastoral community moving with their cattle from place to place. Pushan one of the earliest gods of the Aryans was the protector of cattle and guide of travellers. But when the hymns of the Rig Veda were composed the people had taken to agricultural pursuits. The constant prayer for rain indicates that agriculture was the chief occupation of the singers of the Vedic hymns. Barley seems to have been their principal crop. It is called धान्य in the Rig Veda, which is the modern Sanskrit name for rice ; but Sayana and other interpreters translate it as barley. The art of cultivation was well advanced among the Vedic people ; they ploughed the land ; there is no mention of manuring ; but the primitive methods of irrigation were not unknown. The opening verse of the sixty-eighth hymn of the tenth *Mandala* refers to the practice of watering the cornfields. "उद्पुतो न वयो  
रथमाया वावदतो अन्नियस्ये व घोषः ।" "As the husbandmen,  
when watering the cornfields make noise in frightening  
away birds." The following verses from the 101st hymn  
of the tenth *Mandala* gives a vivid picture of the  
agricultural life in the Vedic age :

"Fix the ploughs, spread the yokes ; sow seeds on

this plot of land which has been prepared. May our praise be laden with harvest. Let the scythes fall on the neighbouring ripe crops."

"The ploughs are being arranged. The labourers are taking out the yokes. The wise people are reciting praises unto the gods. Prepare reservoirs of drinking water for the cattle, tie up the leathern strings; let us draw water from this fine pit with an inexhaustible supply of water."

"Troughs for the cattle have been prepared. Leathern string has been fixed to this sprouting inexhaustible well; water can be drawn easily from it. Let us then draw water."

"Satisfy the horses. Gather the sheafs from the fields; prepare the chariots which can carry the harvest without any harm. This reservoir of water for cattle will be about a *drona*; there is a wheel made of stone in it. The reservoir of drinking water for men will be about a *Skanda*. Fill it up with water."

"Prepare a farming camp; here is a good supply of drinking water for men; sew big drinking vessels. Take out stronger vessels of iron. Make the leather bags strong, so that water may not leak out of them."

Both cows and horses were used for agricultural purposes. Besides these, buffalos, sheep and goats are frequently mentioned among the domestic animals. The taming of elephants was also known in the Vedic times. The sixth verse of the 106th hymn of the tenth *Mandala* speaks of "an elephant driven by steel." Camel must have been a common and valuable beast of burden. "यथा चिर्वद्यः काशः शतसुष्टुनो ददत्सहस्रा दश गोणो" VIII. 5. 37. "King Kasu of the Chedi dynasty gave away

hundred camels and ten thousand cows." The closing verse of the next hymn also mentions the gift of camels.

Milk and its preparations, butter (दूध) and curd (दधि) were everyday articles of food. The meat of cow was freely used for sacrifices as well as for food. "घसत् इङ्ग उम्भाः" "May Indra eat thy bullocks" X. 86. 13. "उम्भो हि मे पञ्चदश साकं पचन्ति विश्वतिं । उताहमधि पौष्ट इदुभा कुञ्जो पृष्ठंति मे विष्वस्मादिन्द्र उत्तरः ॥" X. 86. 14. "Fifteen or twenty bullocks are cooked for me. I get fattened by eating them; both sides of my stomach are filled. Indra is superior to all." The meat of buffalo also must have been a common food. "पचक्षत् महिषाँ इद्र तुर्य" VI. 17. 11. "Let hundred buffaloes be cooked for you, O Indra!" "ती यज्ञता महिषाणमधो मास्तो सरांसि मधवा सोम्यापाः" V. 29. 8. "O Indra ! when you ate the meat of three hundred buffaloes, when you drank three buckets of Soma." Pork also had not yet been interdicted. "शतं महिषान्-चौरपाकमोदनं श्रीराहमिंद्र एमुषं" VIII, 77. 10. "Indra gave hundred buffaloes, rice cooked in milk, and a pig."

Soma was the favourite drink of gods and men. An entire *Mandala* is made of hymns in praise of Soma, besides references to it in most of the hymns of the other *Mandalas*. The Aryans were ardently fond of the Soma drink. It must have had intoxicating power "देवासवत्तिरे पौसये मदं स्वादिष्टं द्रस्मरुणं मयोभुवं" IX. 78. 4. "It (Soma) is intoxicating, sweet above all things, cooling, reddish in colour, and the abode of bliss, which the gods have created for a drink."

"स्वादुविलायं मधुमौ उतायं तौत्रः किलायं रसयौ उतायै ।  
उतोन्वस्य पपिकांसमिंद्रं न कथन सहत आहवेषु ॥" VI. 47. 1.

"This (Soma) is tasteful, it is sweet, it is strong, it

is cool. When Indra drinks it no one can withstand him in battle."

Generally Soma was drunk after being consecrated to gods in sacrifices. But the restriction, naturally, was not always strictly observed. The less piously disposed people often drank it without any religious ceremony. And even the religious teachers sometimes got drunk by taking the liquor in excessive quantities.

"श्वेन आसमदिति: कल्पो मदो विश्वारस्य यजतस्य मादिनः ।  
समन्यमन्यमर्थयत्केवे विदुर्विषाणं परिपानमंति ते ॥" V. 44. 11.

"The intoxication of (the three sages) Viswabar, Yajata and Mayi is swift like a hawk and extensive like Aditi ; they desire each other for companionship in drinking, and become intoxicated with excessive drink."

Besides Soma, some other intoxicating drinks were also in vogue ; but these were looked upon with disfavour in orthodox circles.

"इत्सु पौत्रासो गुञ्जते दुर्मदासो न सुरायां" VIII. 2. 12. <sup>(i)</sup>

"As the foul intoxication of wine fights in the heart, so does, Soma when drunk, fight in the heart."

For raiment the Aryans had cloth. The art of weaving seems to have been learnt a considerable time before the Vedic age ; there are frequent references to weaving in the Rig Veda : "उभा उ नून् तदिदर्थयेऽवि तन्वाये धियो वस्त्रापसेव ।" X. 106. 1. "You two (Aswinis) desire our offering as the weaver weaves his cloth ; you spread our praise." The chief material of cloth was the wool of sheep and goat. "He (Pusha) weaves cloth of wool and he washes cloth." "वासीवायो इवीगाम् वयसांसि भमृजत् ।" There is no indication in the Rig Veda of the use of silk or cotton in the Vedic times.

Use of ornaments for the decoration of body was well-known. Women commonly decorated themselves with ornaments presumably of gold. “परिष्कृतास इद्वा योषेद पित्रावता” “As the newly married bride goes to her husband bedecked with the ornaments given by her father.”

The art of smelting metals had been learnt ; there seems to have already grown up a class of people who did the work of goldsmiths. “विजेहमानः परशुर्णं जिह्वां द्रविर्ण द्वावयति दारु धक्षत्” VI. 3. 4. “As the goldsmith smelts (metals), so fire having burnt wood is drawing out his tongue like an axe.”

Among metals, gold and iron are frequently mentioned in the hymns of the Rig Veda. Besides its use in ornamentation, gold seems to have been used as a coin. Gifts of pieces of gold are often mentioned. These gold coins are sometimes specifically called Nishka (निष्क). As is the case even now these were often used in a string as a garland. “आ खैत्रेयस्य जंतवो युमहर्षेत खण्ड्यः । निष्कग्रीवो हृष्टुक्षथ एना मध्वा न वाजयुः ॥” V. 19. 3. “Living men, versed in singing praise, with Nishkas in their necks, desirous of food magnify the strength of the fire in heaven by praise.”

The chief use of iron was in making weapons and implements of agriculture. The head of the arrow was of iron. Swords were made of iron. “चोदय धियमयसो न धारा” VI. 47. 10. “Sharpen my intellect like the edge of an iron sword.” Vessels of iron are also mentioned in the Rig Veda “पुरः कृषुध्मायसौरहृष्टा” X. 101. 8. “Take out stronger iron vessels.” In several places in the Rig Veda cities of iron are mentioned. “पूर्भिरायसौभिर्न पाहि” VII. 3. 7. “protect us with iron cities.” “अधा मही न आयस्यमाष्टो नृपौतये । पूर्भवा

यतभूजिः” VII. 15. 14. “Thou art unassailable. Do thou be as an iron city of hundred arms for the protection of our men.” Such passages indicate that possibly iron-works were used in fortifying cities.

Carpentry must have been developed to a high degree of proficiency. The carpenter was in great demand in fashioning ploughs and other implements of agriculture. The manufacture of chariots seems to have been a flourishing industry. It is often mentioned as an industry requiring intelligence and manual skill. “रथं धीरः स्वपा अतचं” V. 2. 11. “As a skilful steady fellow constructs a chariot. “या तद्वाम रथौ इवावोधाम दृहस्तमः” V. 73. 10. “These great praises which we are speaking as (the artisan) constructs chariots.”

Among arts and industries, besides those already noted, there is mention of plying the boat. Navigation seems to have made a considerable progress. The Aryans in the Vedic age not only plied their boats on the large rivers, but seem to have ventured into the sea. “आ यदुहाव ब्रह्मणश नावं प्र यत् समुद्रमौरयाव मध्य” VII. 88. 3. “When Varuna and myself embarked into the boat and sent it in the midst of the sea.” “उवासोष्ण उच्छाच्च तु देवो जीरा स्थानां। ये अस्या आचरणेषु इत्प्रिये समुद्रे न शवस्यव ॥” 1. 48. 3. Usha lived in ancient times, and Usha brings the morning now. Usha sends away the chariots which have been made ready on her arrival, as persons desirous of riches send the boats into the sea. “तं गूर्तयो नेत्रिष्वः प्रतीष्वः समुद्रं न संचरणे सनिष्ठवः” 1. 56. 2. “As merchants eager for wealth moving all around spread over the sea, so the priests carrying offerings gather around Indra.”

It is evident from such passages that enterprise in

commerce was much developed in Vedic times. A class of people were engaged in exchange of products and their activity was not confined within land, but extended beyond the seas. Merchants are often referred to as a class. “आग्ने स्थरं रयिं भर पृथुं गोमंतमस्तिनं । अहि खं वर्तया पर्णि” X. 150. 3. “O Agni ! give us plenty of riches consisting of cows and horses ; cover the sky with clouds. Extend the transaction of merchants.”

There seems to have already grown up a class of usurers, who were notorious for their avarice and tyranny. “इद्द्रो विश्वास्येकनाटां अहृष्टश उत क्रत्वा पर्णीरभि” VIII. 66.10. “Indra overcomes all usurers, who count the days.”

A regular monarchical system of government was well established in the Vedic society. People lived peacefully under kings and there was no question of disobeying the royal authority. The entire social structure presupposes the existence of a ruling chief. The office was evidently hereditary. There are frequent references to kings and succession by their descendants. Various kings are mentioned by name in the Rig Veda ; of these Divadasa, Sudasa seem to have been well-known. Their names occur in many places. The office of the king had not yet become a *sinecure*. The king had to bear the brunt of war. He had his court also, often of great splendour. “क्षण्व पाजः प्रसिद्धिं न पृथ्वीं याहि राजेवामवां इमेन” IV. 4. 1. “O Agni ! “manifest thy glory like the extended net of the bird-catcher. As the king rides on an elephant with his courtiers so do thou march.”

A large number of people were engaged in sacrificial work. The composing of the hymns was a work of genius ; everyone cannot sing in verses. The poet is born

and not made. But the extant hymns, which must be only a fraction of all the poetical literature of the age, prove that there were a vast number of poets and seers. The gift of poesy was not confined to the male sex alone ; among the Vedic Rishis there were several women, names of some of whom have come down to the posterity. Of these Ghosha seems to have achieved considerable reputations. Two of the hymns of the Rig Veda, the 39th and 40th of the tenth *Mandala* have been attributed to her. The 91st hymn of the eighth *Mandala* is attributed to Apala of the family of Atrayi. The twenty-eighth hymn of the fifth *Mandala* is likewise composed by a female Rishi, Viswabara by name. She seems to have taken part in the performance of sacrifices as well. “समिदो अग्नि-र्दिवि शोचिरस्ते त् प्रत्यङ्गुष्मसुर्विद्या विभाति । एति प्राची विश्वावारा नमोभिर्देवा ईशाना हविषा दृताची ॥” “The lighted fire is spreading his splendour in the sky, and is shining before Usha ; Viswabara with her face turned to the east and with the pot of sacrificial offerings in her hand is proceeding towards fire singing praises unto the gods.”

Besides the actual composers of the hymns, there were others who learnt them by heart and communicated them to their sons or disciples, who in their turn committed the charge to others and thus preserved the sacred lore of the race. “चित्रा वा येषु दीधितिरासनुकृथा पाति ये” V. 18. 4. “Those priests who perform the several functions in sacrifices, and those who preserve the praises by reciting them.”

Besides these there were a host of priests who were required to perform the daily sacrifices. The performance of the sacrifice was probably at the beginning a simple affair. Every house-holder lighted or trimmed

his own sacred fire, recited some verses in praise of the gods and poured the Soma offering. But gradually the operation grew in complexity ; priests were specially trained for the object, who were engaged at least on special occasions. At first these priests were few in number and each could perform all the functions in connection with a sacrifice. But as in course of time the sacrifices became more and more complex, separate functions were assigned to different persons and there grew up various orders of priests. We find visible marks of the growing complexity in priestly functions in the Rig Veda. In the earlier hymns there is scant reference to the priests, where they are mentioned, they are spoken of as priests (**ऋतिक्**).

But in the hymns of later origin there is a great array of priests ; different functions have been assigned to different classes of priests, who are called by different names. In the third *Mandala*, two classes of priests, the *Adhwaryu* and *Hota* or *Vipra* are mentioned. “**अध्वर्युभिः पंचभिः सप्त विप्राः प्रियं रक्षते निहितं पदं वैः**” | III. 7. 7. “Seven *Vipras* with five *Adhwaryus* watch thy favourite seat.” Of these the *Vipra* or *Hota* recited or sang praises unto the gods and the *Adhwaryu* performed the various dispositions of sacrifices such as making the alter, preparing the offerings etc. “**अध्वर्योर्वा प्रयतं शक्त हस्ताद्वातुर्वा यज्ञं हविषो ज्युषस्त**” III. 35. 10. “O Indra ! do thou accept the (Soma) given by the hands of the *Adhwaryu* or the offering from the *Hota*.”

In the second *Mandala* we find the number greatly increased. Besides the *Hota* and the *Adhwaryu*, quite a number of other priests are frequently mentioned. “**तवाम्ने होतं तव पोतमृतियं तव नेष्टुं त्वमनिदृतायतः । तव प्रशास्त्रं त्वमधरौ-**

यसि ब्रह्मा चासि गृहपतिष्ठ नो दने ॥” II. 1. 2. “Thine, O Agni is the office of the *Hota*, thine is the office of the *Pota*, thine the work of the *Neshta* priest, thou art the *Agnidrita*; when thou desirest sacrifice, the function of the *Prasasta* is thine, thou art the *Adhwaryu*, thou art the *Brahma*, thou art the lord of our household.” The parts of the more important priests are thus defined in the tenth *Mandala* “ऋचां त्वः पोषमास्ते पुपुष्वान् गायत्रं त्वो गायति शक्तरीषु । ब्रह्मा त्वो वदति जातविद्यां यज्ञस्य मात्रां वि मिमीत उ त्वः ॥” X. 71. 11. “One (Hota) co-operates with us by reciting the Mantras profusely, another (Udgata) sings the Saman in Gayatri metre, Brahma explains the Jata-Vidya (order of sacrifices), another (Adhwaryu) again performs the various rites of sacrifices one by one.”

But though the various professions and industries were differentiated and considerably developed, as yet these were not stereotyped in hide-bound hereditary castes in the Vedic age. It is quite evident that at the time when the hymns of the Rig-Veda were composed there were no caste distinctions among the Aryans. Even the names of the four castes, which divided the Hindu society in later times so prominently and formed its very basis, are not to be found in the Vedas in their present sense, with the exception of one significant instance. The terms Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra were unknown in the age of the Rig Veda. The words Brahmana and Kshatriya are found in a few places in the Rig Veda, where they distinctly do not stand for castes. Brahmana means one who sings praises to the gods. “ब्राह्मणासो अतिरात्रे न सोमे सरो न पूर्णमभितो वदन्तः VII. 103. 7. “(O frogs) who speaking like the

singers of praise in the *Atiratra* sacrifice are proceeding towards the ponds."

Similarly, Vipra, which in modern times means the caste Brahmin, in the Rig Veda simply stands for a wise man.

Likewise the word Kshatriya in the Rig Veda means strong or brave and is referred indiscriminately to gods and men.

These words indicated certain qualities and had no reference to incidents of birth or family connection. There was no division of labour in the Vedic society according to birth or lineage. The various professions and industries were followed by men and women according to their individual likings and abilities. The various manual and menial labours, which were in later times relegated to the conquered and subjugated aborigines, were as yet performed by the Aryans themselves. Thus the Aryans themselves were carpenters, blacksmiths, weavers, sailors, tillers of land, and shepherds. It was only in later times, when in the conquered aborigines, the Aryans found a serviceable tool, they relegated the more mechanical portions of labour to them, withdrawing themselves to intellectual pursuits or luxury. In Vedic times we find the Aryans themselves performing all kinds of manual labours indiscriminately without any sense of dishonour or disgrace. "नानां वा उ नो धियो वि व्रतानि जनानां। तत्पा रिष्टं रुते भिषग्ब्रह्मा सुन्वन्तमिच्छतौद्रायेन्दो परि स्व ॥" IX. 112. 1. "Different persons among us have different avocations. The carpenter saws wood, the physician looks after patients, the priest seeks persons desirous of performing sacrifices. Therefore, (O Soma) do thou

be pressed for Indra." The son did not necessarily follow the profession of his father. We find a priest prays for a warrior son ; similarly sons of Kings became priests and singers. The son or a descendant of the famous King Paruchpeda was a Rishi and was the author of many hymns. Different members of one family undertook different professions. The author of the 112th hymn of the 9th *Mandala* distinctly says that the several members of his family have undertaken different kinds of work. "कारुरहं ततो भिषगुपलप्रद्विणी नना । नानाधियो ॥" IX. 112. 3. "I am a composer of hymns, my son is a physician, and my mother is a grinder (of fried barley) on stones. We are of many professions."



## CHAPTER IV.

### RELIGIOUS IDEAS IN THE VEDIC AGE.

Turning to the religious ideas in the Vedic age we find that the Aryans worshipped certain definite deities, whom they called the Devas, meaning possibly the shining ones. The hymns of the Rig Veda were mostly addressed to these deities. In many places of the Rig Veda their number has been categorically mentioned as thirty-three. “ज्ञति स्तुतासो असथा रिशादसो ये ख्य त्रयश्च त्रिंशच । मनोदेवा यज्ञियासः” viii. 30. 2. “O ye Devas, destroyers of enemies and worthy of the sacrifices of men, the sons of Manu, you are thirty-three in number and have thus been praised.” “शुवां देवास्त्वय एकादशासः” “Ye Devas are thirty-three in number “आ नासत्या विश्वरकादशैरिह देवेभिर्यातं मधुपेयमश्चिना” 1. 34. 11. “O Nasatya Aswins, come here with the thirty-three gods to drink the sweet (Soma).” तव ल्ये सोम पवमान निष्ठे विष्टे देवास्त्वय एकादशासः” IX. 92. 4. “O flowing Soma, thine thrice eleven well-known gods dwell in places beyond the ken of eyes.” “तान् रोहिदश्च गिर्वण सूर्यस्त्रिंशतमा वह ।” 1. 45. 2. “O Agni, whose horses are red and who are worthy of praise, do thou bring the thirty-three gods here.”

Such passages do not leave room for the slightest doubt that for a long time the Aryans held the gods to be thirty-three in number. The number of gods specified by name in the Rig Veda cannot be exactly fixed, as in some cases it is doubtful whether a separate god is meant by certain name or it is a different name

of a previously mentioned god. Thus it is doubtful whether Savita is a separate god or it is only another name for Surya ; or whether Viswadeva is a separate god ; or it is a collective name for all the gods. The principal gods mentioned in the Rig Veda are Indra, Agni, Soma, Vayu, Surya Mitra, Varuna, Vishnu, Usha, twin Aswins, Pusha, Rudra, Prajapati, Yama, Parjanya, Aryama, Maruts, Brahmanashpati or Brihashpati, Saraswati, Aditi, Adityas, Ribhus, Ila, Twashta, Savita, Indrani, Varunani, Agnayi, Vasus, Matariswa, Vaiswanar, and Bharati. They make up the prescribed number : some of them, however, are evidently of more recent origin. A few other less important names are occasionally mentioned. The number thirty-three, however, continued to be the traditional number of gods throughout the Vedic Age.

More important than their number is the nature of Vedic deities. Here fortunately the question is not of difficult solution. The gods of the Rig Veda, are mostly, if not entirely, personifications of the powers of nature. The mystery of the world around them deeply stirred the Aryan mind at an early age. The beauty and grandeur of nature awakened their profound enthusiasm and admiration, and in the striking phenomena of the heavens and earth they saw the manifestation of some higher powers. In the ruddy glow of the morning sky, the daily march of the sun across the blue vault of the heavens, the periodical bursting of the thunder clouds and the downpour of the life-giving showers of rain, the fury of the storm which swept over the forests and hamlets of northern India, the vivid imagination of the fresh Aryan mind recognised

some mysterious unseen powers. This was essentially a correct vision, a right and prophetic intuition of the human mind towards the solution of the riddle of existence. It is really astonishing that the Aryan mind grasped the true significance of the phenomena of nature in such a profound manner so early in the history of the human race. The progress of civilization has added but little to the insight of the Aryan mind towards a correct understanding of the mystery of nature. Nowhere do we find a clearer perception of the divine meaning of the world with which our senses bring us into momentary contact. The Aryan Rishis looked at the morning sun, coming out of the eastern sky dispelling the prevailing darkness, and were moved with a profound wonder. With their childlike curiosity, enthusiasm and freshness of the understanding they asked who might be this mysterious visitor. And the answer that suggested to them was, here is a god ; and who will deny, even after the march of so many centuries, that their's was an essentially correct reading of the facts ? The daily miracle of the mysterious emergence of light out of the bosom of darkness moved the Aryan sages to perpetual wonder and they bowed down in awe and adoration with hymns of praise and prayer to the Power, which brought back light and life to the sleeping world. Similarly they beheld with wonder the march of the dark masses of clouds, bursting into showers of rain which gave fertility to the earth and clad it with verdure, that sustained life, and said here is a god, and felt with their child-like simplicity that they must propitiate the deity with prayers and offerings. Thus arose the Vedic Pantheon

and the Vedic worship. In every striking phenomenon of nature the Aryan mind beheld a deity, having enormous powers for good or evil on the destinies of men and the sense of gratitude, fear and hope, innate in human nature led to the institution of praise, prayer, and propitiation by offerings.

That the Vedic gods were the personifications of the powers of nature is obvious from their very names, which stand at once for the material object and for the unseen power associated with it. Agni is the name for the element as well as for the deity, whom the Aryans worshipped as an unseen power. Similarly, Surya, Usha, Vayu are names for some Vedic deities as well as for certain material objects or phenomena of nature. Not only is the deity called by the same name as the material element, but the deity is defined and described at the beginning entirely, and later on largely by the powers and functions of the natural objects and phenomena with which it is associated. Take for instance the deity *Usha*. *Usha* is the sanskrit word for the early dawn. The Vedic deity *Usha* is appropriately conceived as a beautiful goddess, sometimes considered as the bride, sometimes as the daughter of Surya, the Sun. *Usha* is often called the maker of light, harbinger of the day. Men and birds awake at her approach. On her arrival the sacrificial fire is lighted. “एता उ त्याः प्रत्युषन् पुरस्ताज्जोतिर्यच्छंतौरुषसो विभातौः” VII. 78. 3. “Here are the Ushas make the morning and give light appearing in the east.” “उषो यदय भानुना वि द्वाराबृणवो दिवः” 1. 48. 15. “O Usha, thou hast opened the gates of the heaven to-day with thy light.” “उत्से वयश्चिद्वस्तीरपमन्नरस्य धिपितुभाजो अ ल्लौ” VI, 64. 6 “(O Usha) when thou dost

appear, birds come out of their habitation, and men who have a portion in the offerings also awake". Here are a few extracts from a beautiful hymn addressed to Usha : "We know the beautiful glowing Usha, the leader of fine speech ; she had opened the gates (of heaven) for us ; she has disclosed riches unto us by filling the universe with light. She has disclosed the universe." "भास्त्रती नेत्री सुनृतानामचेति चिक्रा वि दुरो न आवः । प्राप्या जगद्व्यु नो रायो अख्यदुषा अजीगम्भुवनानि विश्वा ॥" I. 113. 4. "Usha wakes up those who were lying down in a crooked posture, some for enjoyment, some for sacrifices, some for (earning) riches. Usha dispels the darkness so that those who see a little can see clearly. Usha has disclosed the worlds." "जिद्धाश्वेचरितवे मघोन्याभोगय इष्टये राय उ त्वं । दभ्र' पश्चद्व्य उर्विया विचक्ष उषा अजीगम्भुवनानि विश्वा ॥" I. 113. 5.

"This maiden of perpetual youth, (Usha) daughter of heaven, clad in white, appears before men, dispelling darkness. She is the mistress of all wealth. O thou Gracious One, do thou dispel darkness to-day." "एषा हित्री दुहिता प्रत्यदर्शि व्युच्छंतो युवतिः शुक्रवासाः । विश्वस्य शाना पार्थिवस्य वस्त्र उषो अश्वे ह सुभगे व्युच्छ ॥" I. 113. 7. "Usha is illuminating the extended corners of the sky with her glorious light. Usha has cleared away the darkness (of night). Usha is coming in her chariot well-yoked with the horses of morning light." "व्यंजिभिर्दिव आत-सद्यौदप क्षणां निर्यिजं देव्यावः । प्रबोधयं ल्लणेभिरखैरोषा याति सुयुजा रथेन ॥" I. 113. 14.

"O men, awake; Life, our stimulator, has come ; darkness has departed, light has come. Usha has cleared the way for the Sun. Let us go where (Usha) flourishes distributing food." "उदौर्ध्वं जीवो असुर्न आगादप प्रागात्म

आ ज्योतिरेति । आरैकृपयां यातवे सूर्यायागम्य यत्र प्रतिरंत  
आयुः ॥” I. 113. 16. “O Usha, thou art the mother of  
gods, the equal of Aditi, the revealer of sacrifices, do thou  
shine in thy greatness, do thou appear unto us approv-  
ing our prayers, O thou the desired of all, make  
us numerous in this land.” “माता देवानामदितेरनीकं  
यज्ञस्य केतुर्ण इती वि भाति । प्रशस्तिष्ठाद्ब्रह्मणि नो व्युच्छा नो  
जने जनय विष्ववारे ॥” I. 113. 19.

Still more clearly the following verses from the 124th  
hymn of the first *Mandala* indicate the nature of the  
goddess Usha : “एषा दिवो दुहिता प्रत्यदर्शि ज्योतिर्वसाना समना  
पुरस्तात् । ऋतस्य पंथामन्वेति साधुप्रजानतौव न दिशो मिनाति ॥”  
I. 124. 3. “She (Usha) daughter of heaven, clad in light,  
is slowly appearing in the east. She follows the appoint-  
ed track (of the sun) as if knowing well the order, and  
never does any harm to the quarters.”

“पूर्वे अधेर्व रजसो अपल्लस्य गवां जनिकाङ्गत प्र केतु । व्यं प्रथते  
वितरं वरीय ओभा पृष्ठांतौ पित्रोरुपस्था ॥” I. 124. 5. “(Usha)  
having been born in the eastern half of the sky, wakes  
up the quarters. Sitting on the lap of her parents (earth  
and heaven) and filling them both with her own (glory),  
flourishes well and wide.” “अवियमङ्गले द्युवतिः पुरस्ताद्युक्ते  
गवामरुषानामनीकं । वि नूनमुच्छादसति प्र केतुर्ण हंगृह्मुप तिष्ठते  
अग्निः ॥” I. 124. 11. “Youthful Usha is coming from  
the east, she has yoked red horses to her chariot. She  
dispels darkness in the sky inaugurating the beginning of  
the day. In every household fire (sacrificial) is sitting.”  
I. 124. 11. Then follows the verse, which we have  
already found in the 64th hymn of the sixth *Mandala*.  
“When thou dost rise, (O Usha) birds come out of  
their nests, and men having a portion in sacrificial  
offerings also awake.” Such passages, and they can be

multiplied at any length, do not leave room for the slightest doubt as to the identity of the goddess Usha with the early dawn.

Let us take another instance, that of the god Soma. Soma is an important Vedic deity. One whole *Maudala* of the Rig Veda is dedicated to him. But in majority of these hymns the material aspect of the deity is apparent. It is quite evident that the hymns refer more to the mountain plant which gives a kind of intoxicating drink than a formless deity. Of the Vedic pantheon Soma has perhaps retained its natural character most. The majority of the Soma hymns describe in detail the process of pressing and preparing the favourite drink. “अयं देवेषु जागृतिः सुत एति पवित्र आ। सोमो याति विचर्षणः ॥” IX. 44. 3. “This Soma watches all ; he is careful. He being pressed (from creepers), goes towards the gods. He is going to the collecting vessel (Pavitra).” “उत लामरुः वयं गोभिरंज्ञो मदाय कम्। वि नो राये द्वयो दृष्टि ॥” IX. 45. 3. “Moreover we mingle thee of reddish hue with milk to make thee sweet and delightful. Do thou open the gates of riches unto us. “अध्वर्यो अद्रिभिः सुतं सोमं पवित्र आ सृज। पुनीहीन्द्राय पातवे ॥” IX. 51. 1. “O priests, sprinkle this Soma pressed by stones on the Pavitra (collecting vessel) ; purify it for the drink of Indra.” “अयं ध स तुरो मद इदृशं वर्धत प्रियः” X. 25. 10. “This (Soma) is swelling (fermenting), he soon produces intoxication. He is the favourite of Indra”. At the same time the divine character of Soma is never lost sight of ; Soma is not a mere intoxicating drug ; he is also a god among gods. Like other gods he can give riches, he can destroy enemies ; he has even created the earth and the heavens. “He is called the Killer of

*Rakshashas* exercising supervision over the Universe". "रक्षोऽहा विश्वचर्षणः" IX. 1. 2. "सना जगेति: सना स्वर्विश्वा च सोम सौभगा । अथा नो वस्यस्त्वधि" IX. 4. 2. "O Soma, give us light, give us heaven, give us all good fortunes, then do good unto us." "सोमो धेनुं सोमो अर्वतमाशुं सोमो वीरं कर्मस्य ददाति । सादन्यं विदय्य सभीयं पिण्डश्रवणं यो ददायदद्यै" I. 91. 20. "Whosoever gives offerings to Soma, Soma gives him cows, Soma gives him swift horses, Soma gives him brave clever sons, skilful in household work, desirous of performing sacrifices and magnifying the glory of his father".

"अष्टाङ्गं युतस्य पृतनासु पप्रिं खर्षामप्सां हृजनस्य गोपां ।  
भरेषुजां सुक्षितिं सुश्रवसं जयत्कं ल्वामनु मदेम सोम ॥" I. 91. 21.

"O Soma ! we delight to think of thee, who art invincible in battle, conqueror among heroes, giver of heavens, giver of rain, protector of power, thou who dost dwell in sacrifices, who hast beautiful mansions, who art victorious, and famous".

"त्वमिमा ओषधौः सोम विश्वास्त्वमपो अजनयस्तुं गाः ।  
त्वमा ततंथोर्बंतरिक्षं ज्योतिषा वि तमो बवर्थ ॥" I. 91. 22.

"O Soma, thou hast created all these vegetables, thou hast created water, thou hast created the cows, thou hast stretched the wide sky and thou hast dispelled its darkness with thy light".

Here we find Soma in the full glory of a god. In the earlier stages the material aspect of a god is more predominant, but with the advance of time and sacerdotal tendencies, the imaginative and mythological aspects prevail ; and sometimes the ideal deity is altogether dissociated from the material object. Thus

we find in the 85th hymn of the 10th *Mandala* a verse altogether dissociating the god Soma from the plant.

“सोमं मन्यते पपिवान्यत्संपिष्टं लोकधिं ।  
सोमं यं ब्रह्माणो विदुर्न तस्याश्राति काष्ठन ॥” X. 85. 3.

“Men think that they have drunk Soma, when they press the vegetable. But no one can drink the Soma whom the sages know.” Here the material basis has been quite transcended ; but this is in clear contradiction of the earlier conception. The Aryan mind has travelled long ; it is to be noted that only in the later portions of the Rig Veda, the first and tenth *Mandala*, that such verses occur, showing the gradual emergence of the ideal from the natural conception of deity.

A similar movement of thought is clearly visible in the case of most, if not all the Vedic Gods. It is not necessary to follow the process in detail in the case of every God. The examples given above will suffice to show the genesis of the Vedic gods. The description of god Agni in the Rig Veda confirms this view. In some respects Agni is the most important of the Vedic gods. Though in power and splendour Agni is inferior to Indra, Agni is more closely and familiarly related to man ; he is the messenger between gods and men, carrying the offerings of men to gods and bringing them to men. In every *Mandala*, the opening hymns are addressed to Agni ; thus in a way he is given precedence to Indra. This position of Agni is due to his nearness to men. Of the mysteries of nature, the one nearest to men is fire. The Aryan imagination was moved by the effulgence of the sun, the grandeur of the rolling clouds, and the beauty of the morning sky. But nearer to his home and hearth was this mysterious

presence. Fire, born out of the contact of two sticks of wood, shining with a heavenly glow, always turning upwards consuming everything, giving heat and light, so serviceable to man and yet so terrible ! Here is indeed a god. Other gods were far off in the skies, but here was a god dwelling in their own homes, with whom they could come in constant contact, whom they could light and approach at their will. So they called him the god of their homes, whom the gods have sent down to men, the messenger of the gods. “मन्द्रो होता गृहपतिरन्ने दूतो विश्वामसि” I. 36. 5. “O Agni, thou art gladdener of the heart thou dost call the gods, thou art the lord of the hearth, and the messenger of the gods.” “जुष्टो हि दूतो असि हव्यवाहनोऽग्ने रथौरध्वराणां” I. 44. 2. “O Agni, thou art the cherished messenger of the gods, the carrier of offerings, the master of sacrifices.” Here we find Agni in his sacerdotal character. But this Agni was born of wood. He is often called the offspring of Arani, pieces of stick.

“कृश्चप्रती वेविजे अस्य सच्चिता उभा तरेते अभि मातरा शिशुं ।  
प्रचाजिङ्ग्न् ध्वसयंतं लघुच्युतमा साच्य कुपय वर्धनं पितुः ॥”

I. 140. 3.

“The two mothers of Agni (two pieces of sticks) are moving ; they both do the same work, by becoming black they get their child. The tongue of this child turns to the east, he dispels darkness, is quickly born and gradually mingles with small pieces of wood ; he is to be nourished carefully ; and gives increase to his keeper.”

“कूचिज्ञायति सनयासु नव्यो वने तस्यौ पश्चितो धूमकेतुः ।  
अस्तातापो हृषभो न प्र वेति सचेतसो यं प्रणयंत मर्ताः ॥” X. 4. 5.  
“(Fire) whom men generate with care, grows young

on old wood in some places, in other places become white with the flag of smoke. He does not bathe, marches like a bullock." "वाहुभ्यामग्निमायवोऽजनंत" X. 7. 5. "Men generate him (moving) arms this."

"देवो देवात् परिभूक्तं तेन वज्ञा नो हव्यं प्रथमस्त्रिकिल्वान् ।  
धूमकेतुः समिधा भारतजीको मंद्रो होता नित्यो वाचा यजौयान् ॥"

X. 12. 2.

"Thou art a god; do thou carry our offerings, according to the heavenly law, unto the gods; thou art first, thou art wise. Thy flag is smoke; (being fed with fuel, thy flame becomes straight; thou gladdenest the heart; thou dost ever perform sacrifices with speech."

. "वि वातजूतो अतसेषु तिष्ठते हथा जुह्मिः स्तुष्टा तुविश्वणिः ।  
दृषु यदग्ने वनिनौ हृषायसे क्षणं त एम रश्दूर्म अजर ॥" I. 58. 4

"Agni when excited by wind easily stands on large trees with great noise, extended tongues, and circling splendour. O Agni, who art without old age, when thou dost march forward like a bull to burn the forest trees, thy path becomes black."

"तपुजंभो वन आ वातचोदितो यूथे न साह्वाँ अव वाति वंसगः ।  
अभिव्रजन्नक्षितं पाजसा रजः स्थातुश्वरथं भयते पतत्रिणः ॥"

I. 58. 5.

"Agni being instigated by wind, with weapons of flame, rushes forward violently like a bull in the midst of kine, attacking the juice of trees; the trees and even birds dread him who move on all sides."

Thus it is evident that the god Agni was identified with the element fire, which produced by rubbing two pieces of wood, which burnt woods and forests with flame and smoke. Agni was called ever youthful because it could be always removed with fresh fuel. At the same time Agni was invoked to give riches, and sons and

long life ; but his chief function was to call the gods, and carry the offerings of men to them. Being on earth, he was considered nearer and dearer to men than other gods.

The deity who easily occupies the first place in the Rig Veda is Indra. The largest number of hymns have been addressed to him. He is distinctly called the chief of the gods. Though similar honour is occasionally paid to other gods, Indra is oftenest and in a special way called the first among the gods, clearly indicating his leadership among the Vedic gods. “इद्राय हि द्यौरसुरो अनन्तेद्राय मही पृथिवी वरौमभिर्ज्ञसाता वरीमभिः । इदं विष्णे सजोषसो देवासो दधिरे पुरः । इद्राय विष्णा सवनानि मानुषा रातानि संतु मानुषा ॥” I. 131. 1. “The great heaven himself has bowed down to Indra ; the wide earth has bowed down to Indra ; the wide earth has bowed down to Indra with acceptable praise. All sacrificers bow down to Indra with acceptable offerings. All the gods with one mind have placed at the front. All sacrifices of men and all offerings of men be unto Indra.” But at the outset Indra was only the god of rains. An agricultural community like the Aryans dwelling in the dry climate of Northern India was in great need of periodical rains. And when the rain was withheld for a time, as is often the case even at the present time, the Aryans felt great anxiety and distress. A goodly shower after such a period of draught was a great relief and came to be naturally looked upon as the favour of a god. This god was called Indra.

And in their vivid imagination, coloured by fear, the obstruction of the rains was attributed to the ill-will of an evil spirit, who was called Vritra or Ahi, Indra for

the benefit of the Aryans opened a passage for rains by killing Vritra. The killing of Vritra by Indra is a theme of constant commendation, and it has been narrated a thousand times in the hymns of the Rig Veda, at first in a simple fashion, but later on with much mythologic imagery, till in the Puranas it has been developed into a grand epic.

“त्वमपामपिधानावृणोरपधारयः पर्वते दानुमदसु ।  
हृक्षं यदिंद्र शवसावधीरहिमादित् सूर्यं दिव्यारोहयो हृषे ॥”

I. 51. 4.

“(O Indra), thou didst open the clouds, which held water, kept the wealth of Vritra and other Danavas in the mountain ; thou didst kill the murderous Vritra and then mounted the sun in the sky for men to behold.”

“नास्मै विद्युत्त तन्यतुः सिषेध न यां मिहमकिरदग्धवादुनि च ।  
इद्दृश यद्य युधाते अहिसोतापरीभ्यो मघवा वि जिग्ये ॥” I. 32. 13.

“When Indra fought with Ahi, then the lightning or thunder or rain which Ahi poured did not touch Indra; Indra overcame the other tricks of Ahi as well.”

It is to be noted that here thunder and lightning are said to be the weapons of Ahi ; but in other places they become the weapons of Indra and mythology became busy over the history of their creation, till in later time a grand and inspiring myth was invented about the genesis of Indra's thunderbolt. Let us quote a few more verses to substantiate the main proposition that Indra was primarily the god of rain.

“न ये दिवः सूर्यिव्या अन्तमापुर्न मायाभिषंगदां पर्यमूखन् ।  
युजं वच्च वृषभसक्र इन्द्रो निर्ज्योतिषा तमसो गा अदुष्टत् ॥”

I. 33. 10.

“When rain did not come from the sky to the corner

of the earth, when the earth was not filled with good things, Indra took up his thunderbolt and with the shining thunderbolt milked rain from the cows of dark clouds."

"हरी तु त इंद्र वाजयता दृतसूतं स्वारमस्तर्णि ।

वि समना भूमिरप्रथिष्ठारं स्त पर्वतस्ति सरिष्ठन् ॥" II. 11. 7.

"O Indra, thy swift horses are neighing (pealing of the clouds) heralding downpour of rain. Plain earth is delighted (at the sound); clouds look beautiful as they move hither and thither."

"त्यं चिदित्या कल्पयं शयानमसूर्ये तमसि वावधानं ।

तं चिन्मदानो हषभः सुतस्योचैरिद्रो अपगूर्या जघान ॥" V. 32. 6.

"Vritra having partaken of moisture was enjoying himself in the sky lying down in profound darkness in the midst of water. But Indra who fulfils the desires (of his devotees) delighted with the drinking of Soma, killed him with his thunderbolt."

"इंद्रो हृतस्य दोघतः सानुं वज्रेण हौलितः । ६

अभिक्रम्याव जिज्ञतेऽपः सर्माय चोदयन्तर्चननु स्वराज्य ॥"

I. 80. 5.

"Enraged Indra coming nearer struck with thunderbolt on the thigh of Vritra trembling (with fear), let the water flow, and manifested his power."

"इंद्रस्य तु वौर्यानि प्र वोचं यानि चकार प्रथमानि वौच ।

अहवहिमन्वपस्तर्द प्र वक्षणा अभिनत् पर्वतानां ॥" I. 32. 1.

"We shall speak of the mighty acts of Indra, which the wielder of the thunderbolt performed at the beginning; he killed Vritra, then showered rain, and opened a way for the flowing of mountain rivers."

"अहवहिं पर्वते गिरियाणं लष्टाक्षे वज्रं स्तर्य तत्तज ।

वाशा इव धेनवः स्तदमाना अंजः समुद्रमव जग्म रापः ॥" I. 32. 2.

"Indra killed Ahi who had taken shelter on the

mountain. Twashta had made for him thunderbolt which strikes at a great distance ; then as the cows rush towards the calves, flowing waters rushed forward to the sea."

From being the conqueror of Vritra, Indra came to be the conqueror of all enemies of the Aryans. He was invoked for aid in all the wars of the Aryans. At the head of the heavenly host he fought against the enemies of the Aryans. Indra thus became the leader in battle. His role as the rain-god receded to the back ground and Indra became the god of war.

**“धर्षोहि दसुं धनिन् धनेन एकस्यनुपशाकेभिरिंद्र ।**

**· धनोरधि विषुणक्ते व्यायनयज्वानः सनकाः प्रेतिमौयुः ॥** I. 33.4.

"Indra when thou alone didst kill the Dasyu who was rich, though others were near you, when the sacrificeless Sanakas came to court death from thy bow, thou didst kill them."

**“योगीयोगे तवङ्गतरं वाजेवाजे हवामहे । सखाय इद्रमूतये ॥”**

I. 30. 7.

"At the beginning of every enterprise, at every battle, we invoke the mighty Indra for protection like a friend."

**“तमिवरो वि इयंते समौके रिरिकांसस्तन्वः क्षणूत लां ।**

**मिथो यत्यागमुभयासो अग्नमवरस्तोकस्य तनयस्य सातौ ॥”**

IV. 24. 3.

"Him verily men invoke in combat, risking their lives, they make Indra their protector, when heroes face to face give up their bodies, fighting each side for children and their offspring."

**“तमिवरो वि इयंते समौके रिरिकांसस्तन्वः क्षणूत लां ।”** IV. 24. 3.

"Men invoke him (Indra) in battle, make him protector of their naked bodies." "यत्पात्र चक्षते विजयंते जनास्तो यं युध्यमाना अवस्ते इयंते ।" II. 12. 9. "O men, without whom

no one can become victorious, whom people at the time of battle invoke." Imagination clothed him in terror. 'वज्रपाणि' "thunderbolt in hand" became one of his commonest epithets. He was invested with the glory and splendour of the Lord of the heaven and the earth. Indra gave to his devotees, wealth, power, prosperity.

"श्वेत इंद्र पुरुषम् मन्त्रम् तवेदिदम् भित्तेकिते वसु ।

अतः संगृभ्यामिभूत आ भर मा त्वायतो जरितुः काममूनयौः ॥"

I. 53. 3.

"O Indra, mighty, wise, shining, we know that all the wealth that is around is thine ; O thou vanquisher of enemies, gather that wealth and fill us with it ; do not disappoint those who desire thee."

"दूरो अक्षस्य दूर इन्द्र गोरसि दूरो यवस्य वसुन इनस्तिः ।

गिरानरः प्रदिवो अकामकर्शणः सखा सखिभ्यस्तमिदं गृणीमसि ॥"

I. 53. 2.

"O Indra thou art giver of horses, thou art giver of cows, thou art giver of corn, thou art the chief among givers, ancient god ; thou dost not disappoint the desires ( of thy devotees), thou art friend among friends ; unto thee do we address this praise."

The process of deification did not stop here. Gradually Indra became the creator of the universe ; he it was who had set the sun in the sky ; he it was who had laid the foundations of the earth. "त्वमिङ्गासि वृत्वा व्यंतरिष्यमतिरः । उह्यामस्तभ्ना ओजसा ॥" X. 153. 3. "O Indra, thou art the destroyer of Vritra, thou hast spread the sky ; thou hast raised the heaven by thy might." "पतिर्बुधासमो जनानामिको विश्वस्य भुवनस्य राजा ॥" VI. 36. 4. "O Indra, thou art the unequalled lord of the worlds, thou art the one king of the universe." "यसा यावाच्छ्रविवी पौत्रं महायसा व्रते वरणो यस्य सर्वाः ।

यस्तेन्द्रस्य सिधवः सच्चति ब्रतं महत्वंतं सख्याय इवामहे ॥”  
 I. 101. 3. “Whose (Indra’s) might the earth and heaven contemplate, according to whose law Varuna and Surya move, at whose command the rivers flow, we invoke that Indra with the Maruts to become our friend.” And then many a myth about the prowess and majesty of Indra were told, which were further developed in the Puranas.

Another prominent Vedic god is Surya or Savita ; the two names seem to stand for the same, deity, who is evidently the sun-god. Both the words in Sanskrit mean the sun. The description of Surya and Savita in the Rig Veda obviously refer to the sun. Of all objects in nature, the sun might undoubtedly be expected to strike the imagination of a people like the Aryans, and we find that the sun played a very important part in the Vedic religion. It is probable that more than one Vedic god owed his origin to the phenomena connected with the sun and the sky. About the two gods or one god having the two names Surya and Savita, there can be hardly any doubt. Savita returns day after day by the east-gate to illumine the universe ; at the close of Savita’s work night appears ; when Savita comes the stars run away like thieves :

“उद्ग अ देवः सविता सवाय गम्भात्मं तदपा विश्वरसात् ।”

II. 38. 1. “The shining god Savita eternally rises for the birth of the universe, that is his work.” “पुनः समव्यदिततं वयंती मध्या कर्तेन्द्रिधाच्छक्त धोरः । उद्संहायास्यादृग्तुं रद्वर्हरमतिः सविता देव आगात् ॥” II. 38. 4. “Night like a weaver woman is again enveloping light. Wise men leave off in the middle the work which they had been doing. When tireless Savita, the divider of the seasons, comes again people

wake up again." "आ दृष्टेन रजसा वर्तमानो निवेश्यत्प्रहृतं  
मर्त्तं च । हिरण्ययेन सविता रथेना देवो याति भुवनानि पश्यन् ॥"

I. 35. 2. "Deva Savita passing along the dark paths of the sky marches in his golden chariot, overseeing the worlds and waking up the immortals and mortals."

"अष्टे अरव्यत्कुभः पृथिव्यास्त्री धन्व योजना सप्तस्तिंधून् ।

हिरण्यातः सविता देव आगाहधद्रवा दाश्वे वार्याणि ॥" I. 35. 8.

"Savita has disclosed the eight quarters of the earth, the three worlds of creatures and the seven rivers. May Savita with golden eyes be pleased to come here with jewels and other desirable things for the sacrificers."

"येन सूर्यं जगोतिषा वाधसे तमो जगच्च विश्वसुदिविर्भि भागुना ।"

X. 37. 4. "O Surya, by what light thou dost destroy darkness, and by what rays thou dost disclose all universe."

"तरणिर्विश्वदर्थतो जगोतिस्तुदसि सूर्यं । विश्वमा भासि  
दीचनं ।" I. 50. 4. "O Surya. thou travellest (along the long path), thou art seen by all, thou art the creator of light, thou dost shine in the sky".

"धामान्तः मित्रावरुणा  
युवाशुः सं यो यूथो जनिमानि चहे ।" "O Mitra Varuna, who (see) watches over the worlds and creatures as the shepherd watches over his flock."

"अप ल्ये तायदो यथा नक्षत्रा यन्त्वत्तुभिः । सूराय विश्वचक्षसे ॥"

1. 50. 2. "When Sun, the eye of the universe comes, the stars like thieves go away with the night." The identity of Savita or Surya is abundantly proved by these passages. At the same time Savita is a god, who fulfils the desires of his devotee, who gives riches to men, who is even invoked to remove the sins of men.

"वेद यस्त्रीष्मि विद्यान्येषां देवानां जन्म सनुतरा च विप्रः । नक्षु  
मर्त्तं वृत्तिना पश्यत्तमि चक्रे स्त्रो अर्थं एवान् ॥" VI. 51. 2.

"Who knows the three knowable (words), who is wise, and knows the mysterious birth of gods, that sun oversees

the straight and crooked actions of men and fulfils all their right desires.” “शा देवो याति सविता परावतोऽप्य विश्वा  
दुरिता वाधमानः ।” I. 35. 3. “The god Savita comes from afar destroying all sins.” “यद्य सूर्यं ब्रवोऽनागा उद्यत् ।” VII. 60. I. “O Surya, arise and pronounce us sinless to-day.” Thus we have the material and ideal aspects of Surya equally evident in the Rig Veda, showing the genesis and gradual enrichment of the nature of the deity.

Another Vedic god, who seems to have originated from the phenomena connected with the sun is Vishnu. Though Vishnu does not play an important part in the Vedic religion, in view of his predominance in later Hinduism, much interest attaches to the references to him in the Rig Veda. There are not many hymns in the Rig Veda addressed to him ; but he is always spoken with great regard and seriousness. In the 5th verse of the 66th hymn of the tenth Mandala, where the nature of other gods is indicated by characteristic adjectives, Vishnu is called great or majestic “विष्णुर्महिमा”. In the 9th hymn of the seventh Mandala it is said of Vishnu that those who have been born or those who shall be born cannot know the end of the majesty of Vishnu. “न ते विष्णो  
जायमानो न जातो देव महिमः परमंतमाप ।” VII. 99. 2. Who is this majestic god ? There is not much data to solve this problem definitely. But there are enough indications to divine the genesis of Vishnu. In the 100th hymn of the seventh Mandala Vishnu is said to have walked in his glory three steps over the earth with his hundred rays. “त्रिदेवं पृथिवीमिष एतां वि चक्रमे शतर्चसं महिमा ।” The one feat which is repeatedly and constantly attributed to Vishnu is that he walked in three steps over the universe. “यस्मै विष्णुस्त्रौणि पदा विचक्रमः” VIII. 52. 3. “For

whom Vishnu walked three steps." "यो रजांसि विममे पार्थिवानि लिङ्गिद्विष्णुर्मनवे वाधिताय।" VI. 49, 13. "This Vishnu measured the worlds in three steps for the benefit of tyrannised men." "विश्वोर्नुं कं बौद्धाणि प्र वोर्चं यः पार्थिवानि विममे रजांसि। यो अस्कभायदुत्तरं सधस्यं विचक्रमात्म-स्त्रेधीरुगायः॥" I. 154. 1. "I shall speak of the mighty works of Vishnu, who measured the worlds, who astonished the upper worlds, who walked three steps ; people praise him greatly." "यस्योरुपु लिङ्गु विक्रमणेष्वधिक्षियन्ति भुवनानि विश्वा।" I. 154. 2. "In whose three steps the three worlds stand exhausted." "य इदं दौर्चं प्रयतं सधस्यमेको विममे विभिरित् पदेभिः।" I. 154. 3. "Who alone measured these three long wide worlds by three steps." The three steps of Vishnu have been interpreted as the rise of the sun in the morning sky, his mounting on the zenith and his setting in the western horizon. In the Puranas quite a fanciful story about the three steps of Vishnu was invented ; but in the Vedic times it was understood to mean the march of the sun across the sky. The verses that have been quoted abundantly confirm this view. Vishnu has been said to possess hundred rays. Further we find that he is said to protect the earth with his rays : "व्यस्तभ्ना रोदसी विश्वं वेते दाधयं पृथिवीमभितो मयूरैः।" VII. 99. 3. "O Vishnu, thou dost hold this earth and heaven in many ways. Thou dost hold the earth with thy rays." Then there is a famous verse, which compares Vishnu with an eye spread in the heavens. "तद्विष्णोः परमं पदं सदा पश्यति स्त्रयः दिवौष चक्षुराततं।" "The wise behold the highest step of Vishnu constantly as an eye spread in the heaven," We are therefore abundantly justified in holding that the Vedic god Vishnu owed his origin to and was long identified with the sun.

The origin of yet another Vedic god has been attributed to the sun phenomena. This is the god Pusha ; Pusha is an interesting and ancient god. In the Rig Veda he is pre-eminently the god of cattle and pasture. The Vedic Aryans seem to have invoked him for safety in conducting their cattle, through distant pastures. It seems likely that when Pusha was a favourite god of the Aryans they were yet a nomadic people. In the Rig Vedic period he was evidently on the decline, which process continued till in the Pouranik age Pusha entirely disappeared from the Hindu Pantheon. However, there can be no doubt that in the Rig Veda he was a pastoral god. “पूषा गा अन्वेतु नः पूषा रक्षत्वर्वतः । पूषा वाजं सनोतु नः ।” VI. 54. 5. “May Pusha follow our cows, may Pusha protect our horses, may Pusha give us food.” A goat was the carrier of Pusha. “पूषणं न्वजाश्चमुप स्तोवाम्” VI. 55. 4. “We praise Pusha, whose carrier is a goat” Pusha was the god who gave safety in travelling. “सं पूषक्षधनस्तिर व्यंहो विमुचो नपात् । सद्गु देव प्र णस्पुरः ।” I. 42. 1. “O Pusha, do thou take us across the path, remove sins, O thou the son of the clouds, march in front of us. “यो नः पूषवन्धो वृक्को दुश्चेव आदिदेशति । अप स्य तं पथो जहि ।” I. 42. 2. “O Pusha, whoever harmful, thievish, wicked, leads us to wrong paths, do thou remove him from our path.” “अति नः सखतो नय मुगा नः मुपथा क्षणु । पूषनिह क्रतुं विदः ।” I. 42. 7. “Lead us by ways where there is good grass ; may there be no new trouble on the way. O Pusha, do thou know the means of our protection.” It is possible that the Sun shining in the sky and thus guiding the shepherds in the trackless plains was worshipped by the wandering Aryans as

the god Pusha. This surmise is strengthened by verses like the following :

“अजाम्बः पशुपा वाजपस्यो धियजिन्वो भुवने विश्वे अपिंतः ।  
चक्रां पूषा गिथिरामुद्दरो वृजत् संचक्षाणो भुवना देव ईयते ॥”

VI. 58. 2

“Pusha, who has the goat for his carrier, who is the protector of cattle and protector of wealth, who delights his devotees, set over the whole universe with lightly moving goad in his hand marches overseeing the worlds.”

Another deity of doubtful origin is the twin brothers, Aswins. They are always spoken together ; a considerable number of hymns of the Rig Veda are addressed to them and there are frequent references to them. The twin brothers, Aswins, were prominent Vedic gods ; but their identity was forgotten at an early age. Yaska in the sixth century B. C. mentions several alternative views : “तत्कौ अखिनौ आवाष्टिव्वौ इति एके । अहोरात्रौ इति एके । सूर्याचम्द्रमसौ इति एके । राजानौ पुरुषैष्टौ इति ऐति-हासिका:” “Who are the Aswins ? Some say they are, the earth and the heaven ; others say the day and the night, others, again, the sun and the moon. The historians say they were two pious kings.” If the problem was difficult at the time of Yaska, it is much more so now. All that can be said is that they were considered as the healers of diseases, and were invoked to give relief in all difficulties at first and then in times of illness.

Another couple of important Vedic deities, who are often, though not always, mentioned together, are Mitra and Varuna. Their origin is less difficult to discern. They are identified by some scholars with the Iranian deity Mithras and the Greek god Uranus. This is not improbable. The similarity in sound is striking and in

their general characteristics also there is correspondence. Mithras in Iranian religion is the god of light, and Uranas in Greek mythology is the god of the sky. Mitra and Varuna are in the Vedic religion associated with the sun and the sky. That they are ancient gods in the Vedic Pantheon is obvious and like Pushan they were receding to the background in the Vedic times. But there is a solemnity about them, especially in the case of Varuna, which is not to be found in the case of other Vedic gods. The deepest ethical elements in the Rig Veda are associated with the god Varuna. He is often invoked for the remission of sins.

‘यत् किं चिदं वरुण दैव्ये जनेऽभिदोहं मनुषाधरामसि ।  
अचित्तो यत्तव धर्मा युयोपिम मा नस्तस्मादेनसो देव रौरिषः ॥’

VII. 89. 5.

“O Varuna, we are men, whatever transgressions we have made with reference to the gods, whatever of thy law we have neglected, do not destroy us for those sins.”

“पृच्छे तदेनो वरुण दिव्याशूपो एमि चिकितुषो विष्टच्छम् ।  
समानमित्ये कवयचिदाहुरयं ह तुभ्यं वरुणो द्रूणौते ॥” VII. 86. 3.

“O Varuna, being desirous to see I ask thee of that sin. I went to the wise to ask many questions. They have all said the same thing : ‘Varuna is angry with thee.’ ”

“किमाग आस वरुण ज्येष्ठं यत् स्तोतारं जिघांससि सखायं ।  
प्र तथे बोचो दूसभ स्थावोत्व त्वानेना नमसा तुर इयां ॥”

VII. 86. 4.

“O Varuna, what sin have I committed that thou wouldest destroy the chief of thy devotees, thy friend ? O thou unassailable, tell me, so that I may come to thee quickly with salutations and offerings.”

“अवदूर्घानि पित्रा सृजा नोऽव या वयं चक्षमा तनुभिः ।  
अव राजन् पशुद्धणं न तायं सृजा वर्त्तन् न दाक्षी वयिष्ठं ॥”

VII. 86. 5.

“O Varuna, do thou disentangle us from the sins that have come down from our fathers ; do thou disentangle us from the sins, which we have committed with our own bodies ; do thou disentangle us, O King, as a thief who stole a cattle or a calf from the rope.”

Generally speaking the hymns addressed to Varuna rise to a high pitch of spirituality.

“वेदा यो बीनां पदमन्तरिक्षे पतताम् । वेद नावः मसुद्रियः ॥”  
“वेद मासो धृतव्रतो हाहश प्रजावतः । वेदा य उपजायते ॥”  
“वेद वातस्य वर्तनिमुरोक्त्यवस्थ छ्रहतः । वेदा ये अध्यासते ।”  
“नि षसाद धृतव्रतो वरुणः परस्यास्ता । साम्वाज्याय सुक्रातुः ॥”

I. 25. 7.—10.

“He knows the path of birds that fly through heaven, and, Sovran of the sea.  
He knows the ships that are thereon.  
True to his holy Law, he knows the twelve moons with their progeny :  
He knows the moon of later birth.  
He knows the pathway of the wind,  
the spreading high and mighty wind :  
He knows the gods who dwell above Varuna,  
True to holy laws, sits down among his people ;  
He, most wise, sits there to govern all.’

(Griffith's translation.)

“छर्हं हि राजा वरुणश्चकार सूर्याय पंथामन्वेत वा उ ।  
अपदे पादा प्रतिधातवेऽकरुतापवक्ता छ्रद्याविधसित् ॥”

I. 24. 8.

“King Varuna, had made a way for the continuous

march of the sun ; he has made a path in the pathless heavens for the steps of the sun. He reproaches my enemy who pierces my heart. Varuna is often called the king and the emperor. He is described as terrible as well as forgiving."

"यो मूलयाति चक्रुषे चिदागो वयं स्याम वरुणे अनागः ।  
अनु न्रतान्यदितीर्ज्ञ धन्तो यूयं पात स्वस्तिभिः सदा नः ॥"

VII. 87. 7.

"Who (Varuna) becomes soft, even to him who has committed wrong. May we become sinless to him by fulfilling his law ? Do ye protect us by welfare ?"

"विषेषां वः सतां जगेष्टमा गीर्भिर्मित्रावरुणः वाहृधर्षौ ।  
सं या रज्मेव यमतुर्यमिष्ठा हा जनां असमा बाहुभिः स्तैः ॥"

VI. 67. 1.

"O Mitra and Varuna, Ye two are oldest, unrivalled, and chief of the controllers ; ye restrain the people by your arms as by a rope. I magnify you by my praise." But Mitra and Varuna were already on the decline in the Rig Veda ; in the later mythology of the Hindus Varuna becomes only the god of the sea, and Mitra altogether disappears. The process has commenced in the Rig Veda. Varuna is often called there the god of waters. In the 66th hymn of the 10th Mandala where some of the gods are characterised by special features, Varuna is called "the lord of the waters." "सरस्वान्यौभिर्वरुणो ।" Still on the whole it may be said that Varuna is the most solemn and spiritual of the Vedic gods.

We have said enough about the Vedic gods to make their nature and origin fairly clear. It is not necessary to continue the account in detail about the remaining less important gods. These gods continued to be worshipped throughout the Vedic age, though towards

the close of the period a faint intuition of their unity seems to have dawned in the minds of some of the Rishis. With the progress of knowledge the Aryans realised the interconnection between the forces of nature, and the truth that the various objects and powers in the heaven and the earth are but the different manifestations of the One Supreme reality, was foreshadowed. This seems to have been reached through two processes, one of which has been called by the late Prof. Max Muller, Henotheism, consisting of the exaltation of one particular god at a time. This was indeed a common feature of not only the Vedic but the whole Hindu religious literature. When any particular god was spoken of he was magnified above all others and raised to the position of almost the one Supreme God. Thus we have already seen that sometimes Indra, sometimes Varuna, sometimes Savita, sometimes Agni have each in turn been spoken of as the chief of the gods or the creator of the world.

Another process of approximation towards Monotheism in the Vedas was by the identification of the various Vedic gods. This may have commenced at first in the case of a few gods. Agni seems to have supplied the first clue in this momentous process. The identity of fire in the heaven and on the earth was clearly realised by the Vedic Rishis.

“द्विरस्य तो परमा संति सत्या स्मार्हा द्वेषस्य जनिमान्यग्नेः ।  
अनंते अन्तः परिवोत् आगच्छुचिः शुक्रो अर्यो रोहणामः ॥”

#### IV. I. 7.

“This Deva Agni has three great, true, desirable births. In the boundless region, he came to be invested as pure, radiant, friendly and mightily resplendent.” The three births have been interpreted by Sayana as

consisting of those as Agni, Vayu and Surya. But elsewhere there is a clearer indication of these three births.

“द्वितीयं प्रथमं जन्मे अग्निरस्माद्वितीयं परि जातवेदाः ।

द्वितीयमप्सु नृमणा अजस्मिन्धान एन जरते स्वाधीः ॥” X. 45. 1.

“Agni was first born in the sky (as lightning) ; his second birth was amongst us as Jataveda. His third birth was in water. Thus Agni, the benefactor of men, is always shining.” Next we find in the third Mandala an interesting hymn, the 55th, the verses of which are in turn addressed to many gods, Usha, Agni, Earth, Heaven, Vishnu, Indra, etc. ; but at the end of every verse recurs the refrain “the great might of the Devas is one” “महदेवानामसुरत्वमेकं ।” Here is an unmistakable recognition of the Unity of the gods. In another way the unity of the gods was indicated in the seventh hymn of the first Mandala, where it has been said that all the praises addressed to various gods are Indra’s. “तुंजे तुंजे यु उत्तरे स्तोमा इद्रस्य वच्चिणः ।” I. 7. 7. Finally there is a well-known verse in the first Mandala, which says that the different gods are but the various names of the One reality.

“इद्र मित्रं वरुणमग्निमाहृथो दिव्यः स सुपर्णो गरुत्मान् ।

एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्त्यग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः ॥” I. 164. 46.

“They call him Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni and the heavenly noble-winged Garutman ; sages call the One Reality by many names, Agni, Yama, Matariswa.” There are indications that the Vedic Rishis had a faint idea, that above the visible things, above the several gods and goddesses there was a Supreme One : “नैतावदेना परो अव्यदस्य चा स व्यावाष्टिवौ विभर्ति । त्वर्चं पर्वितं क्वणत स्वधावान्यदौ” सूर्यं न इरितो वश्वित ॥” X. 31. 8. “They (the earth and the heavens) are

not all ; there is another above them. He is the creator, he preserves the earth and the heavens, he is the lord of food. When the horses of the sun did not begin to carry the sun, He created his sacred skin (i. e. before the sun was created, he existed)." Yet, we cannot call the Religion of the Vedas Monotheism ; there was only a faint foreshadowing of the Monotheism, and that too towards the close of the Vedic age. Most of the passages, having a distinct monotheistic colouring, are from the first or the tenth Mandala, which all scholars assign to the close of the Vedic age. In the Upanishads we find this faint monotheistic light developed in its full glory.

The great merit of the Vedic religion consists not only in the recognition of the existence of unseen realities, in "Higher than we," but also in the knowledge that we can have communion with them, and that the higher beings are not indifferent to men ; on the other hand they are interested in our welfare, holding intimate relationship with men. The Aryans of the Vedic age addressed the gods in a very familiar cordial strain ; they approached the Gods, with prayers and offering, with a remarkable freedom and familiarity and yet with solemn regard, after the manner of the most advanced conception of modern times. The intimacy of men with Gods developed into a deep, tender, sweet relationship in the Vedic hymns. The Aryans addressed the Gods as Lord, Father, Friends : "अग्नि मन्ये पितरमन्मापिमन्म भातरं सद्भित्सव्याय" । X. 7. 3. "I consider Agni as Father, as a near one, as brother, as my friend for all times." "भर्तु वज्रस्य धृष्णोः पिता पुत्रभिष्व प्रियं ।" X. 22. 3. "Indra holds his thunderbolt for our protection as a father

for his dear son." "अधा पितेव सून्दे वि वो मदे मृक्षा नो  
चमि चिदधादिवक्षे ।" X. 25. 3. "Be gracious, at your glad  
carouse—as sire to son. Preserve us even from  
slaughter. Thou art waxing great."

But this intimate and delicate relationship was at the bottom frankly utilitarian, even mercenary. The relation between the gods and men was that of giving and taking. The gods would give men wealth, property, children and long life, and men would offer to the gods praise, Soma and other offerings and sacrifices. It was a question of barter pure and simple. Those who would not offer sacrifices to the gods, would not get the good things of the world.

"विसर्णं छतुहि वित्तमेषां ये भुज्ञते अपूर्णतो न उक्थैः ।  
अपद्रवन् ग्रसवे वाऽवानान् ब्रह्मदिष्टः सूर्याद्यावयस्त ॥" V. 42. 9.

"Those who themselves enjoy pleasure but do not give pleasure by praises, do thou extinguish their wealth. Those who are haters of prayers and do not perform sacrifices, even if they have many offerings, do thou debar them from the sun." The sole motive of sacrifices, offerings and praises was, at the beginning at least, to induce the gods to give wealth and prosperity.

"स्त्रीमं त इदं विमदा ग्रजीजमन्त्रपूर्व्यं पुरुतमं सुदानवे ।  
विश्वा श्वस्य भोजनमिनस्य यदा पशुं न गोपाः कारामहे ॥"

X. 23. 6.

"O Indra, the Bimadas having known thee as greatly generous, have composed this unique and great praise for thee. We know what pleases him. As the shepherds bring the cattle near them by tempting them with food so let us bring Indra unto us." The sacrifices were the articles for barter on the human side ; they were greatly prized by the gods ; in fact the gods desired the praises and

sacrifices as much as men desired the favours of the gods. Thus with praises and sacrifices the Aryans constantly besought the gods for favours. "Give us this", "give us that" such was the constant cry of the Vedic hymns. The object for which they prayed most was riches. "उरुणस्तन्वे तनं उरुचयाय नस्तुधि । उरु नो यंधि जौवसे ॥" VIII. 68. 12. "Give us large wealth for our sons. Give us large wealth for our grandsons, give us large wealth for our habitations." The Aryans seem to have been mightily afraid of poverty.

"माहं मघीनो वरुण प्रियस्य भुरिदावु आ विदं शूनमापि ।  
मा रायो राजन्तसुयमादव स्थां हृष्टदेम विदथे सुवोराः ॥"

II. 27. 17.

"O Varuna, may I not have to speak of the poverty of any dear relative to any rich people. May I not want in the necessary wealth. We shall praise thee greatly with our sons and grandsons." This is the concluding prayer of more than one hymn. (II. 27, II. 28, II. 29.)

"माहं राजन्यज्ञतेन भोजं ।" II. 28. 9. "O king Varuna, may I not have to live upon the earnings of others." So they asked for cows, for horses, for food, and for every form of comfort without any reserve. "सहस्रं व्यतोनां युक्तानामिंद्रमीमहे । शतं सोमस्य खाद्यः" IV. 32. 17. "We beg of Indra a thousand swift-going trained horses. We (beg) a hundred jars of Soma." "उरुं नृभ्य उरुं गव उरुं रथाय पंथां । देववीतिं मनामहे ॥" VIII. 68. 13. "We pray for the prosperity of our men, for the prosperity of our cows, for the prosperous march of our chariots and for sacrifices."

"भोजा जिष्युः सुरभिं योनिमध्ये भोजा जिष्युर्वध्यं या सुवासाः  
भोजा जिष्युरम्बः पियं सुराया भोजा जिष्युर्यें आङ्गताः प्रर्थति ॥"

X. 107. 9.

"Bhojas (or devotees) get first-class cows which produce milk and butter, Bhojas get well-dressed wives, Bhojas get the essence of wine. Bhojas conquer insolent enemies." "बौद्धि खस्तिं सुचितिं दिवो नृविषो अंशांसि दुरिता तरेम ता तरम तवावसा तरेम ।" VI. 2. 11. "Do thou lead thy devotees to worldly prosperity. May we get rid of enemies, sins, and distress ; may we get rid of them."

"कदा भुवन्नयद्याणि ब्रह्म कदा स्तोते सहस्रोषं दा : ।

कदा स्तोते वासयोऽस्य राया कदा धियः करसि वाजरब्राः ॥"

VI. 35. 1.

"O Indra when shall our praises come to thee seated on chariot ? When wilt thou give to thy worshipper means for the subsistence of a thousand generations ? When wilt thou reward my praises with wealth ? When wilt thou make my sacrifices productive of food ?" Another object of frequent prayer was long life. "वैष्ण रायो वि यासि दुच्छुना मदेम शतहिमाः सुवीराः ।" VI. 12. 6. "Give us wealth, and save us from distressing enemies. May we enjoy for hundred winters with brave sons." In this strain the Vedic hymns pray for wealth for food, drink, wines, children, long life and every conceivable object of pleasure and comfort. As yet there is no trace of the world-weariness, so marked a feature of the later Hindu literature. Life to them was a delight and blessing ; they keenly enjoyed the good of this world and prayed for more of it, and there is no very eager desire for the good of the other world. Evidently all their joys and hopes centred round this world and its concerns. There is not much of what we take as spiritual ideas in the Rig Veda. The nature of the gods is defined more by material prowess and grandeur than by spiritual qualities, though

occasionally such epithets as "upholder of truth" "destroyer of sin" are applied to the gods. IV. 4. 14.

We have already told that the deepest spiritual ideas in the Rig Veda are to be found in connection with the god Varuna. A very common adjective often applied to him is धृतव्रत "the support of order". Prayers for spiritual gifts are very rare, compared with the prayers for material things, though not altogether absent. There are occasional prayers in which there is a genuine ring of aspiration after spiritual illumination. "ईसे च त्वा यजमानो हविर्भिरौये सख्त्वं सुमतिं निकामः ।" III. 1. 15 "I, thy sacrificer, worship thee with offerings, I worship thee desirous of thy friendship and right understanding,". "चतारिष्म तमसस्यामस्य प्रति स्तोमं देवयन्तो दधानाः ।" VII. 73. 1. "Having been desirous of the gods and having rendered praises (unto them), we shall cross over to the other side of the darkness."

"अदिति मित्र वरुणोत मल यहो वयं चक्षमा कच्छिदाग्नः ।  
उर्वश्यामभयं ज्योतिरिंद्र मा नो दौर्घा अभि नशन्तमिस्ताः ॥"

II. 27. 14.

"O Aditi, O Varuna, O Mitra, if we have committed any offences against you, do ye forgive them. O Indra, may we enter the wide fearless light ; the long darkness may not overtake us." It is doubtful what is meant by the "fearless light" and "long darkness" here. Still it is a prayer far in advance of the common prayer for riches and comforts. In the next hymn there is again a prayer for light. "मा ज्योतिषः प्रवस्थानि गम ।" II, 28. 7 "May we not be exiled from light." Finally there is the famous verse, which still forms the formula for daily meditation "वत् सवितुष्टरेष्व भर्गे देवस्य धीमहि । खियो यो नः प्रचोदयात् ॥"

III. 62 10." "Let us meditate on the adorable light of the great god Savita, who inspires us with intelligence."

The conception of sin has often been considered a sure index of the religious depth of a race or community. In the Vedic hymns there are pretty frequent prayers for deliverance from sins, though it must be confessed that in comparison with prayers for riches, children, and long life, they are not too many. However prayer for deliverance from sins is not altogether absent in the Rig Veda.

An important factor in the religious belief of a community is the conception of life after death. A few words on this subject are called for here, especially in view of the great importance that was attached to it in later Hinduism. The conception of life after death in the age of Rig Veda would seem to have been very simple. Evidently the question did not engage serious thought of the community at large or even of seers and thinkers. They were more interested in the things of this life than in the next. The existence of life after death was firmly believed. Death was not the end. Dissolution of the body did not mean the extinction of life. Distinction of body and spirit was clearly indicated, but as yet no complicated theories as to the details of the life after death have emerged. There is no trace of the doctrine of transmigration in the Rig Veda. The spirit, after death, is said to proceed to another world which is sometimes called the realm of Yama or Death, and the world of the fathers "पितृस्थान" It is a land of joy and brightness where the departed soul lives in eternal bliss under the rule of the King Yama in the company of fathers.

“यत्र व्योतिरजस् यस्मिष्ठोँ के खर्षितम् ।  
तस्मिन् मां धेहि पवमानामृते लोके अक्षित इन्द्रायेन्द्रो परि स्व ॥”

IX. 113. 7.

“O ! Pavamana, place me in that deathless,  
undecaying world  
Wherein the light of heaven is set, and everlasting  
lustre shines  
Flow Indu, flow for Indra’s sake.”

“यत्र राजा वैवस्ततो यत्रावरोधनं दिवः ।  
यत्रामूर्यद्वौरापस्तत्र माममृतं वृधीन्द्रायेन्द्रो परि स्व ॥”

IX. 113. 8.

“Make me immortal in that realm where  
dwells the King, Vivaswan’s son,  
Where is the secret shrine of heaven, where  
are those waters young and fresh.  
Flow, Indu, flow for Indra’s sake.”

“सं गच्छस्त्र पिण्डभिः संयमेनेष्टपूर्तेन परमे व्योमन् ।  
हित्वायावद्यः पुनरस्तमेहि सं गच्छस्त्र तन्वा सुवर्चाः ॥” X. 14. 8.

“Meet Yama, meet the fathers, meet the merit of  
free or ordered acts in highest heaven.

Leave sin and evil, seek anew thy dwelling, and bright  
with glory wear another body.”

In the heaven the departed enjoy the fruits of good  
deeds performed in this life,

“उच्चा दिवि दक्षिणावन्तो अस्युये अस्तदाः सहते सूर्येण ।

“हिरण्यदा अस्तत्वं भजन्ते वासोदाः सोम प्र तिरन्त आयुः ॥”

X. 107. 2.

“High up in heaven abide the Guerdon-givers : they  
who give steeds dwell with the Sun for ever.

They who give gold are blest with life eternal : they  
who give robes prolong their lives, O Soma.”

But as yet no elaborate scale of reward and punishment in the life to come according to the merits and demerits in this life, has been evolved. Mention of a world of darkness as a counterpart of heaven is found occasionally in the Rig Veda.

इन्द्रासोमा दुष्कृतो वन्ने अन्तरज्ञारम्भणे तमसि प्र विघ्नतम् ।

यथा नातः पुनरेकश्चनोदयत्तहामस्तु सहसे मन्युमच्छवः ॥

VII. 104. 3.

"Indra and Soma plunge the wicked in the depth, yea, cast them into darkness that hath no support.

So that not one of them may ever thence return : so may your wrath might prevail and conquer them."

But the description of this world of darkness is not as frequent and full as that of the realm of Yama. On the whole the conception of the life after death is meagre, vague and indistinct and the passages referring to the next life would appear from the context and language to be of later Vedic period.

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## YAJUR VEDA

The next land-mark in the religious development of India is to be found in the Yajur Veda, the second in the canon of Hindu scriptures. Though far inferior to the Rig Veda in poetical and historical value, it was held in high esteem in priestly circles. The Yajur Veda was indeed a sacrificial manual, the Vedic prayer-book, the hand-book of the priest. It is manifestly a compilation, not an original composition. It contains the rituals for the various sacrifices. These rituals are made up of formulas called Yajus, which must have grown up in course of time in priestly circles interspersed with verses taken from the Rig Veda. The need of an authoritative and complete book of rituals for all the important sacrifices is obvious, and it was to this natural demand that the Yajur Veda must have owed its existence. Though occupying the second place in the common classification of the Vedas, chronologically its compilation is possibly of a later date than even the Atharva Veda. The Yajur Veda contains verses, which are obviously taken from the Atharva Veda, either with or without modification.

The social and religious conditions found in the Yajur Veda, also reveal its later origin and serve to indicate its distance from the Rig Veda. Whereas in the Rig Veda there is hardly any trace of reference to the caste distinctions, in the Yajur Veda we find the four castes fully developed. Of course the Yajur Veda, being a compilation of Mantras and formulas of different

periods, the ideas, whether religious or social are not of a homogeneous character. There are elements in the Yajur Veda, where the four castes have been fully formed and crystalised, whereas in other portions, we find them yet in an imperfect stage of formation. The two higher castes of Brahmana, and Kshatriya have emerged distinctly throughout the Yajur Veda. It is these two castes that are mentioned oftenest ; their interests are specially safe-guarded and their welfare is particularly invoked. Apparently these two castes formed the chief factors of the society ; at least the others do not seem to have counted for much ; even the Vaisya caste is not associated with them :—

“ब्रह्म दृष्ट चतुं दृष्ट शायुषं ह प्रजान् दृष्ट ।” V. 27.

“Strengthen the Brahmanas, strengthen Thou the nobles, strengthen our vital power, strengthen our offspring.”

“स न इदं ब्रह्म चतुं पातु तत्त्वे साहा ।” X. III. 38.

“May He (Agni) protect our priesthood and nobility. To Him all hail”

“षा ब्रह्मन् भास्त्रयो ब्रह्मवर्चसी जायतामा राष्ट्रे राजन्यः शूरं रथ्योदित्याधी महारथो जायतां दोष्वौ चेनुर्वोदानडुनाशः सक्षिः पुरं विर्योपा जिञ्चाू रथेणाः समीयो युवास्य यजमानस्य वोरो जायतां ।”

XXII. 22.

“O Brahman, let there be born in the kingdom the Brahman, illustrious for religious knowledge ; let there be born a Rajanya, heroic and skilled archer, piercing with shafts, mighty warrior ; the cow giving abundant milk ; the ox good at carrying ; the swift courser, the industrious woman.”

Here we find that the Rishi prays for cow, ox, horse, but no prayer is offered for the Sudra, or the Vaisya.

In the evolution of the Aryan social system, for a considerable period the Brahmanas and the Kshatriyas, the priestly and the warrior classes, held ground, without any recognition of the other people, who were engaged in agricultural or commercial business. But in course of time, these latter by virtue of the importance of their services to the society must have improved their position and the privileged Brahmanas and Kshatriyas were compelled to make room for them within the social polity. The gradual advancement of the position of the Sudra is extremely interesting. When the Aryans came in contact with the original children of the soil, they were looked upon as enemies ; their common name in the Rig Veda was the *Dasyus*, the robbers. In the Yajur Veda they are oftenest called the *Dasas*, the slaves ; the robber or fiendish enemy has became the despised slave. After the long and sanguinary struggle, when the people of the land had to give way to the superior strength or larger resources of the invaders, those who submitted to the conquerors were made slaves, as was the case in many other instances in the history of our planet. They were employed in all kinds of menial work, without any place or recognition in the society. The *Dasa* proved himself very serviceable and one by one the crafts and industries passed into his hands, while the white conquerors gave themselves up to the pursuit of knowledge or exercise of arms, and later on to ease and indolence. The professions which in later times became the monopoly of the Sudras and were looked down upon as inferior callings, were freely exercised in earlier times by all classes without any reproach. The Aryans themselves

were carpenters, blacksmiths, goldsmiths etc. But when, the cheap labour of the conquered *Dasyu* was available the conquerors naturally passed on all manual labour to him. The conquered people found their opportunity in the new position, and they proved themselves serviceable and useful, and the ruling classes could no longer ignore them altogether and thought it desirable to give them a place within the pale of the society. So they were recognised as one of the four, though the lowest, limbs of the social body. The *Dasyu*, the mortal enemy of the Aryans, at last became the Sudra, the indispensable useful, docile artisan. This transformation was effected before the end of the Vedic period. In the Yajur Veda though in most passages the Brahmana and Kshatriya alone are referred to, there are a few instances where the Vaisya and Sudra also are mentioned, as for example in the following passage where a prayer is offered for the Vaisya and Sudra along with the Brahmana and Kshatriya :—

“रुचं नो धेहि ब्राह्मणेषु रुचं राजसु नस्त्रिधि ।

रुचं विष्णवेषु शूद्रेषु मयि धेहि रुचा रुचम् ॥” XVIII. 48.

“Give lustre to our Brahmans : set lustre to our Kshatriyas, lustre to Vaisyas and Sudras ; give, through lustre, lustre unto me.”

Though the four castes had emerged distinctly before the compilation of the Yajur Veda, we cannot be sure that they had already become hereditary. There is no indication to show that they were not classifications based on merit and profession, at least in the case of the Brahmana and Kshatriya. The evolution of the Brahmana caste evidently had a long history. The very name Brahmana was the

product of gradual development. We find it seldom in the Rig Veda. The term that is commonly applied to the makers and seers of the hymns in the Rig Veda is *Vipra*. In the Yajur Veda and the Atharva Veda also the word, Brahmana, is rare. The common appellation for the priestly class in the Yajur Veda and Atharva Veda is Brahma. It is evidently the word which in the later Rig Vedic period had been applied to one of the four classes of priests. In the later Rig Vedic period, the presiding priest in a sacrifice was called Brahma. In the Yajur Vedic period, this dignified name was evidently generalised and applied to all engaged in sacrificial work. Later on it was lengthened into Brahman and finally fixed into Brahmana, which is still the usual name of the priestly caste.

In religious ideas we do not find much advancement in the Yajur Veda beyond the Rig. We find the same gods invoked and prayers and sacrifices to the gods of the Rig Veda, though there has been some change in their relative position and importance. The most important and notable change in this direction is the prominence of Prajapati, Vishnu and Rudra. The germ of the Hindu Trinity, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, which was so fully developed in the Puranas is, to be found in the Yajur Veda. Vishnu and Rudra are well-known figures in the hymns of the Rig Veda but they are not so prominent there as Indra, Agni, Surya or Varuna ; and Prajapati is a mere shadow in the Rig Veda. But in the Yajur Veda, all these, specially Prajapati, has attained a very prominent place ; whereas the more prominent gods of the Rig Veda such as

Indra, Agni, Varuna, Soma, and Surya have somewhat receded to the back-ground. Prajapati is frequently extolled as the first among the gods, the head of the hierarchy.

“यस्मावजातः परोऽपन्योऽपस्ति य आविवेश भुवनानि विश्वा ।  
प्रजापतिः प्रजया संराष्ट्रात्मौणि ज्योतींषि सचते स षोडशी ॥”

## VIII. 36.

“Than whom there is none other born more mighty, who hath pervaded all existing creatures,—Prajapati rejoicing in his, offspring, He, Shodasi, maintains the three great lustres.”

The *Pouranik* conception of Prajapati as the creator and father of all creatures—gods and men, has become quite distinct in the Yajur Veda :—

“प्रजापते: प्रजा अभूम ।” IX. 21.

“We are the children of Prajapati.”

“प्रजापतिश्चरति गर्भेऽचम्भरजायमानो बहुधा विजायते ।” XXXI. 19.

“In the womb moves Prajapati : He, never becoming born, is born in sundry figures.”

Prajapati is definitely identified with “Hiranyagarbha” of the Rig Veda.

“येन यौरथा पृथिव्यो च दृढा येन स्तः स्तम्भितं येन नाकः ।

योऽन्तरिक्षे रजसो विमानः कम्है देवाय हवित्रा विधेम ॥”

## XXXII. 6.

“By whom the heavens are strong, and earth stands firmly, by whom light's realm and sky-vault are supported ; by whom the regions in the air were measured. What God shall we adore with our oblation ?”

The germ of the Pouranik conception of creative water in which Prajapati was first born, by whom the rest of the universe was created, is also met with in the Yajur Veda.

सुभूः स्याम्भुः प्रथमोऽन्तर्मंहत्वर्णवे । दधे ह गर्भमृतिर्य यती जातः  
प्रजापतिः ।” XXIII. 63.

“The strong, the self-existent one, the first within the mighty flood, laid down the timely embryo from which Prajapati was born.”

Similarly there has been a considerable addition to the conception of Rudra in the Yajur Veda. In the Rig Veda, Rudra is a shadowy figure ; Rudra is a name by which Vayu or the Maruts are occasionally called. But in the Yajur Veda Rudra has become a distinct and important deity. He has received a vivid and definite colouring. It may be said that no other deity has yet been so much concretised as Rudra. He has been described as a huntsman wandering on the mountains with bow and arrows in hand :

“यामिषु गिरिशन्त इस्ते विभर्षस्त्वे ।

शिवा गिरित्र तां कुरु मा हिंसोः पुरुषं जगत् ॥” XVI. 3.

“The shaft which, Mountain-haunter, Thou art holding in Thy hand to shoot, make that auspicious, Mountain Lord ; injure not man or moving thing.”

“अवततधन्वा पिनाकावसःक्षत्तिवासा ।” III. 61.

“With bow unstrung, with muffled staff, clothed in a garment made of skin.”

“परमि हृष्टायुधं निधाय क्षत्तिं वसान आचर पिनाकी विभदागहि ॥”

XVI. 51.

“On some remotest tree lay down thy weapon, and clad in robe of skins approach, bearing thy bow come hither forward.”

He is also spoken as a “Physician”, healer of the cows and horses and men.”

“मेषजमसि मेषर्ज गवेऽस्याय पुरुषाय मेषजम् ।” III. 59.

"Thou art a healing medicine, a balm for cow and horse and man."

'He is also spoken of as the Vanquisher of serpents.

"अध्यवीचदधिवत्ता प्रथमो देव्यो भिषक् । अहीय सर्पनि ।" XVI. 5.

"The Advocate, the first divine Physician, hath defended us, crushing all serpents."

It is very curious whence these wild attributes have been added to the conception of Rudra. In the Rig Veda also Rudrā is described as a terrible and furious deity, personifying the fury of the storm ; but in the Yajur Veda the awful aspect has received in a weird appearance ; "clad in skin, with a muffled staff and unstrung bow." It is not unlikely that these strange developments are due to the identification with or the assimilation of some non-Aryan deity. He has not yet become the destroying third person of the Pouranik Trinity, but the development in that direction is apparent. He is the most terrible among gods, from whom men seek to keep away.

"परि नो रुद्रस्य हेति हृषकु परिक्षेषस्य दुर्मतिरघात्योः ।" XVI. 50.

"May Rudra's missile turn aside and spare us, the great wrath of the impetuous One avoid us."

"अहिंसकः शिवोऽतीर्थः ।" III. 61.

"O gracious, not harming us, depart."

But Rudra is not merely a terrible God, he has also an aspect of benignity, most bounteous, most auspicious.

"मौकुष्मः शिवतम शिवी नः सुमता भव ।" XVI. 51.

"Most bounteous, most auspicious, be auspicious, well-inclined to us."

Many of the epithets of Siva are also to be found

in the Yajur Veda such as Nilagriva, Sitikantha, Pasupati, Girisa, Bhava, Sarva etc. It is interesting to notice that Rudra has already become the god whose favour secures husbands for girls.

“त्वं त्रिष्णुकं यजामहे सुगन्धिं पतिवेदनं ।” III. 60.

“We worship Tryambaka, the husband-finder (with flowers) sweet to smell.”

With Rudra is also associated the Pauranik goddess Ambika, in the Yajur Veda ; but here she is his sister and not wife as in the Puranas :—

“एष ते रुद्र भागः सह स्वसाम्बिकाया तं जुषस्त्वाहा ।” III. 57.

“O Rudra, this is thine allotted portion. With Ambika, thy sister, kindly take it.”

In the Yajur Veda the position of Vishnu has considerably advanced. Vishnu is very frequently referred to.

One of his appellations is उरुग—‘far-striding.’ VIII. 1.

On the other hand the chief Rig Vedic gods such as Indra, Agni, and Soma have appreciably fallen off in importance in the Yajur Veda. Indra is not often spoken of as the head of the gods ; he has become the foremost fighter, the war-god :—

“बलविज्ञायः स्वविरः प्रवीरः  
सहस्रान् वाजी सहस्रान उथः ।  
अभिवीरो अभि सत्वा सहोजा  
जैत्रमिन्द्र रथमा तिष्ठ गोवित् ॥” XVII. 37.

“Conspicuous by Thy strength, firm, foremost fighter, mighty and fierce, victorious, all-subduing ; the Son of Conquest, passing men and heroes, kine-winner, mount Thy conquering car, O Indra.”

Indra in the Yajur Veda is the patron of the

Kshatriyas as Brihaspati is the patron deity of the Brahmanas. The myth of the slaying of Vritra and the liberation of water by Indra, which is so tirelessly repeated in the Rig Veda, is also forgotten in the Yajur Veda. Indeed Indra occupies a much less important position in the Yajur Veda than in the Rig Veda either relatively or absolutely.

So also is the case with Agni. In the Yajur Veda, he has lost all the natural and poetic glow of the Rig Veda and has become merely an abstract deity, the sacrificial intermediary, the messenger of gods.

The decline of Soma is still more conspicuous. Even as a sacrificial offering, Soma is not prominent. Clarified butter has become the chief material for offering in the Yajur Veda period :—

“सम्यक् सवन्ति सरितो न धेना अत्तहृदा मनसा पूयमानाः ।  
द्वृतस्य धारा अभि चाकशीमि ॥” XIII. 38

“Like rivers our libations flow together, cleansing themselves in inmost heart and spirit. I look upon the flowing steams of butter.”

It seems that the Aryans having moved away from the mountain regions, Soma became a rare commodity and difficult to secure; consequently some substitute had to be found and clarified butter easily occupied the place of the Soma.

“अस्य प्रलामणु युतं शुर्णदुदुक्षे अङ्गयः । पयः सहस्रामृषिम् ।”

III. 16.

“After his ancient splendour they, the bold, have drawn the bright milk from the sage who wins a thousand gifts.”

In the original hymn the bold are the Soma-pressers and the sage is the Soma. But in the Yajur Veda

Mahidhara, to suit the sacrificial occasion, explains the words as Milkers and Cow.

The important Rig Vedic deities Aswins and Usha are very rarely mentioned in the Yajur Veda. The god Savita, however, is frequently referred to. He has become the inspiring deity of all sacrifices.

‘देव सवितः प्रसुव यज्ञं प्रसुव यज्ञपतिं भगाय ।’ IX. 1.

“God Savita ! speed forward our sacrifice ; speed to his share the patron of the sacrifice.”

“देवस्य ला सवितुः प्रसवे” I. 10.

“By the impulse of god Savitar” is a very common formula in the Yajur Veda with which a sacrifice is commenced. Occasionally Savita has been extolled to the highest position among the gods.”

शृणवन्तु विश्वे अमृतस्य पुत्रा आ येधामानि दिव्यानि तस्मः ।

यस्य प्रयाणमन्वन्य इद्युद्युर्द्वा देवस्य महिमानमोजसा ।

यः पार्थिवानि विमसे स एतश्चो रजांसि देवः सविता महित्वना ॥”

XI. 5, 6.

“Hear ye, all sons of the Immortal, who have resorted to celestial dwellings, what celestial regions there are, whose going forth and majesty the other deities have followed with their might. He who hath measured the earth and the heavens by his great power, is the god Savita.”

The famous Gayatri, the formula of daily prayer of the Hindus addressed to Savita, which is originally found in the Rig Veda III. 62. 10. is also to be seen here.

“तत् सवितुर्वरेण्यं भर्गो देवस्य धोमहि । धियो यो ऽः प्रथीरयात् ॥”

III. 35.

“We meditate the excellent glory of Savita, the god, who inspirereth us with knowledge.”

The sombre and majestic figure of the Rig Veda

deity, Varuna, has become considerably fainter in the Yajur Veda. Varuna has become specially associated with the waters, thus fore-shadowing the Pouranic conception of Varuna as the god of the ocean. The Aswins also have become the physicians of the gods.

**“प्रत्यौहतामधिना मृत्युमन्त्रादेवानामने भिषजा शचैभिः ।”**

### XXVII. 9.

“The Aswins, Leeches of the gods, O Agni, have chased death far from us with mighty powers.”

Many of the ideas and conceptions of the Puranas are to be found in the Yajur Veda. In this respect there has been a considerable development over the Rig Veda. No new god of any importance has emerged yet. A few new names such as Skanda, Sukra, Vena, Marka, Manthin (Chap. 7) Ahibudhniya, (XI. 19,) Suna and Siva (XII. 69) are mentioned here ; but they have not assumed any permanent shape. The seasons, months, days and nights have been deified in the 24th chapter. But the Rig Vedic number of 33 gods is still adhered to. Only in one place the number of gods is given as three hundred.

But on the other hand the Upanishadic conception of one God has also assumed definite and reasoned shape. The Upanishadic name of Atman or Brahman has not as yet become distinct. But the conception of one Universal God has come out distinctly. At times Prajapati seems to be considered as the Supreme God. In the thirty-second chapter the supreme God is spoken of as ‘तत्’ ‘That’ as in the Upanishads :—

**“तदेवाभिस्तदादित्यसादायुस्तदुपनिषद्माः तदेव शक्तं तत्त्वां ता  
पापः स प्रजापतिः ।” XXXII., repeating the idea of Rig Veda.**

"Agni is that ; the Sun is that ; Vayu and Chandramas are that ; the Bright is that ; Brahma is that, those Waters, and Prajapati are that."

In the last chapter the Upanishadic conception of one God pervading the Universe is to be found in its full glory :—

**"रैश्वास्यमिदं सर्वे यत् किञ्च जतत्यां जगत् ।"** XL. 1.

"Enveloped by the Lord must be this All—each thing that moves on earth." \*

In fact it is the opening chapter of one of the most important Upanishads. It is likely, however, that it is a later addition. But there can be no doubt that many of the pregnant and profound ideas of the Upanishads have been foreshadowed in the later Vedic Age.

The ethical conceptions of the Yajur Veda are far in advance of those of the Rig Veda. The sense of sin and short-coming has been appreciably developed and the Mantras of the Yajur Veda breathe a genuine hankering after higher ethical life. Though the Rig Vedic prayers for riches, long life and numerous progeny still continue in the Yajur Veda, they are much less frequent in comparison with the Rig Veda ; on the other hand prayers for spiritual things—knowledge, forgiveness of sin, and immortality—are more numerous.

**"ब्रह्मस्ते सवितर्बोधयैन्"** XXVII. 8.

"Brihaspati, Savita, wake this man to knowledge."

**"तेजोऽसि, तेजो मयि धेहि । वौर्यमसि वौर्यं मयि धेहि ।  
वलमसि, वलं मयि धेहि । शोजोऽशोजो मयि धेहि, मन्युरसि मन्युं  
मयि धेहि । सहोऽसि, सहो मयि धेहि ।"** XIX. 9.

"Thou art lustre, give me lustre ; Thou art vigour, give me vigour ; Thou art strength, give me strength ; Thou art energy, give me energy ; Thou art passion, give me pas-

sion ; Thou art conquering might, give me conquering might," are prayers of a higher order than such prayers as :—

**"उरणस्तन्वेतन उरुव्याय नस्त्रिभि उह नो यंधि जीवसे ।"**

Rig Veda. VIII. 68. 12.

"Give us large wealth for our son. Give us large wealth for our grandson, give us large wealth for our habitations."

The composers of the Yajus have caught the glimpse of a higher existence ; they have discovered a heaven above earth.

**अगम्य उत्तीर्णमृता अभूम् ।**

**दिव्यं पृथिव्या अध्यारुह्यामाविदाम देवान् सञ्चर्योति ।" VIII. 52.**

"We have attained the light and grown immortal ; we have gone up from earth to heaven, have found the gods and heaven and light".

A still more distinct evidence of the advancement of moral ideal in the Yajur Veda is the clearer consciousness of sin and earnest prayer for forgiveness.

**यद् यामि यदरप्ये यक्षमायां यदिन्द्रिये । यदेनशक्तमा वयमि-  
न्नद्व यजामहे स्वाहा ।" III. 45.**

"We expiate by sacrifice each sinful act that we have done, whether in village or in forest, in company or corporeal sense."

**"अब देवैदेवक्षतमेनो यासिष्यमव मर्त्यैर्मर्त्यक्षतम् ।" III. 48.**

"With gods may I wash out the sin that I have sinned against the gods, with men the sin against men."

The same prayer is again repeated in fuller detail in VIII. 13.

**"देवक्षतस्यैनसोऽव यजनमसि मनुष्यक्षतस्यैनसोऽवयजनमसि-  
पिद्वक्षतस्यैनसोऽवयजनमस्याक्षतस्यैनसोऽवयजनमस्यैनस एनसोऽव  
यजनमसि । यज्ञाहमेनो विदाचकार यज्ञाविदास्तस सर्वमें  
चसोऽव यजनमसि ।"**

"Of sin against gods, thou art atonement ; of sin against man, thou art atonement ; of sin against fathers thou art atonement. Of sin against oneself thou art atonement ; of every sort of sin Thou art atonement. The sin that I have knowingly committed and the sin that I have unknowingly committed, of all that sin thou art atonement."

"यदि दिवा, यदि नक्षमेनांसि चक्रमा वयं । वायुर्मा तस्मादेनसो  
विश्वामुच्छत्वंहसः ॥ यदि जायद्याद् स्वप्न एनांसि चक्रमा वयं ।  
सूर्यो मा तस्मादेनसो विश्वामुच्छत्वंहसः ॥ यद्यथामि यदरथ्य  
यत्सभायां यहिन्द्रिये । यच्छूद्रे यदर्ये यदेनशक्रमा वयं यदेकस्याचि  
धर्मश्चि तस्याव यजनमसि ।" XX. 15. 16. 17.

"If in the day-time or at night we have committed acts of sin, may Vayu set us free from that iniquity and all distress. If when awake or in our sleep we have committed acts of sin, may Surya set us free from that iniquity and all distress. Whatever sinful act we have committed in village or in forest in company or by corporal sense, towards the Sudra or the Arya or to either's disadvantage, even of that sin Thou art the expiation."

"इदमापः प्रवहता वदच्च मलच्च यत् । यशाभिद्वृत्तोहान्तं  
यच्च शोपे अभीरुणम् । आपो मा तस्यदिनिसः पवमान च सुच्छतु ॥

VI. 17.

"Ye waters, wash away this stain and whatever be here ; each sinful act that I have done and every act of mine, may waters rid me of that guilt and Pavamana set me free."

"दुष्पदादिष्व सुमुचान लिन आतो मसादिष्व ।  
पूर्णं पवित्रेष्वात्मापः शुच्छतु मैत्रसः ।" XX. 20.

• "As one unfastened from a stake, or cleansed by

bathing after toil, as butter purified in a sieve, may the water cleanse me from my sin."

Passages like these reveal a very deep and living consciousness of sin and an intense longing for purification. The easy-going naturalism of the Rig Veda has evidently been left behind. The moral sense has been deeply stirred, a new consciousness has been developed, the gulf between the actual and the ideal has been revealed and we find that Rishis are no longer praying only for riches and progeny but there is a genuine yearning for light and purity in their sacrificial formulas.

"देव सवितः प्र सुव यज्ञं प्र सुव यज्ञपतिं भगाय । दिव्यो गन्धर्वः  
केतपूः, केतचः पुनातु वाचस्यतिवचं नः स्वदतु ॥" XI. 7.

"Our sacrifice, God Savita, speed forward, may he speed forward the sacrificer to prosperity. May the celestial Gandharva, cleanser of thought and will, cleanse our thought and purpose ; the Lord of speech sweeten the food we offer."

"परिमाले दुर्वरितादाधखा मा सुचरिति भज ।" IV. 28.

"O Agni, from unrighteous conduct, make me a sharer in the path of goodness."

The pregnant and profound ideas of the Upanishads, which constitute the most important and characteristic elements of Indian religions, are distinctly fore-shadowed in the Yajur Veda. The attention of the Rishis has already begun to be arrested by the grandeur of the inner world. The thirty-fourth chapter of the Yajur Veda opens with half a dozen remarkable verses, which have rightly been regarded as an Upanishad. Here the human mind is called the "peerless spirit stored in living creatures."

“यद्यूर्बं यज्ञमन्तः प्रजानां” XXXIV. 2.

“यज्ञोतिरन्तरमृतम्युजातु”। XXXIV. 3.

“Immortal light which creatures have within them.”

“येनेदं भूतं भूतं भविष्यत्परिगृह्णोत्तमस्तेन सर्वं ।” XXXIV. 4.

“Whereby immortal all is comprehended the world which is and what shall be hereafter.”

“यज्ञायतो दूरमुदैति दैवं तदु सुपस्थ तथैवैति । \*

दुरङ्गमं ज्योतिषां ज्योतिरेकम्यम् मनः ।” XXXIV. 1.

“That which divine mounts for when man is waking, that which returns to him, when he is sleeping, the light's one light that goeth to a distance.”

• “यस्मिन्बृचः साम यजूषि यस्मिन् प्रतिष्ठिता रथनाभाविवाराः ।”

XXXIV. 5.

“Wherein the Riks, Samans, Yajur verses are established like spokes within a car's nave.”

The majesty of the human mind could not have been announced more effectively.

Traces of the conception of Unity with the gods are found in the following passages :—

“अहम्परस्ताद्यमवस्ताद्यदन्तरिक्षमादुमे पिताभूत् ।

“अहं सूर्यसुभयतो ददर्शाहन्देवानाम्यरमङ्गुहा यत् ॥”

“I am in heaven above, on earth beneath it. The intermediate region was my father. I saw the sun both from above and under. I am what the gods in secret hold the highest”.

The distinction between right and wrong is fairly developed, and the reward for right-doing and punishment for wrong-doing is distinctly recognised. Those who do the right, go to the higher world, and those who commit evil deeds go to a nether world.

There is a heaven where those who do good go :  
 “स गो विश्वानि हवनानि जीवहिष्मश्चूरवसे साधुकर्मा ।

VIII. 45.

‘May he hear kindly all our invocations, who gives all  
 bliss for aid whose works are righteous,

And correspondingly there is a nether world or hell,  
 where the evil-doers have to go :

\* “अभिदासत्त्वधरङ्गमया तमः ॥” VIII. 44.

“Send down to nether darkness him who seeks to do  
 us injury.”

In heaven there are all kinds of pleasant things :

The theory of Karma and transmigration of the  
 soul has not yet been distinctly developed. Good deeds  
 have to be recognised by the gods, through the inter-  
 vention of Agni.

“एतं जानथ परमे व्योमन् देवाः सधस्या विद रूपमस्य ।  
 यदागच्छत् पथिभिर्देवयानैरिष्टापूते ऋणवाद्याविरक्षै ॥”

XVIII. 60.

“Acknowledge him, ye gods, in highest heaven.  
 Ye who are present, know the shape ye weareth.  
 When he approacheth by the God-ward pathways,  
 Reveal to him the need of pious actions.”

But as yet the complete and exact remuneration  
 of actions done in one life in other forms of existence  
 is not to be found in detail. The eschatological ideas  
 of the Yajur Veda are about the same as those of the  
 Rig Veda.

## SAMA VEDA

The Sama Veda, the third book of the Vedic canon is of little importance to the inquirer of the development of religious ideas. It is practically a musical selection from the Rig Veda. Though recognised as a separate and independent treatise, it is mostly a compilation from the Rig Veda. Of the 1549 verses comprising the Sama Veda, only 78 are not found in the Rig Veda. The rest are verses taken from different parts of the Rig Veda with some alterations here and there. They are addressed to the familiar Rig Vedic gods and are traditionally ascribed to the Rishis of the Rig Veda, a large number of them to Vaishnava. They throw an important light on the compilation of the Vedas. It is evident that the entire poetical productions of the Rishis were not collected in the Rig Veda. Besides the hymns comprising the present Rig Veda Samhita, there must have been an appreciable number of hymns, which for some reason or other could not be included in that collection. Some of these possibly were of later growth; but the omission cannot be entirely due to chronological reasons. For the Sama Veda, at least in some parts, bears traces of earlier compilation. The not unfrequent variations in the texts of the verses taken from the Rig Veda seem to be older and more original than the text of the Rig Veda.

No clue has yet been found as to the date and personality of the compiler. The Sama Veda is the hymn book of the Vedic religion. The Major portion of

the matter, as has already been mentioned, has been taken from the Rig Veda. Two verses are found in the Yajur Veda. No fixed principle seems to underlie the compilation. The first part of the Sama Veda consists of a number of hymns, mostly of the verses composed of single verses taken from different parts of the Rig Veda. In the whole collection it is very rarely that an entire hymn of the Rig Veda has been taken. The first part is entirely made up of fragments of verses and semi-verses taken at random from the Rig Veda. The following hymn will serve as a specimen of the structure of the hymns of the first part of the Sama Veda :—

## PART I.

### CHAPTER II. Dasati VI.

“अपादुश्चिप्राक्षसः सुदक्षस्य प्रहोषिणः ।

इन्द्रेऽरिन्द्री यवाश्चिरः ॥” S. V. II. vi. 1 ; R. V. viii. 16. 1.

“Indra, whose jaws are strong, hath drunk of  
worshipping Sudaksha's draught.

The Soma juice with barley brew.”

“इमा उत्वा पुरुषोऽभिप्रणोन्तवूर्गिरः ।

गावो वस्त्रधेनवः ।” S. V. II. vi. 2 ; R. V. viii. 18. 4.

“O Lord of ample wealth, these songs of praise  
have called aloud to thee.

Like milch-kine lowing to their calves.”

“अताहगो रमन्वतनाम लट्टरपौच्यः ।

इथा चक्रमसो चहे ॥” S. V. II. vi. 3 ; R. V. I. 84. 15.

“Then straight they recognised the mystic name  
of the creative steer,

There in the mansion of the moon.”

“यदिन्द्रो यमयद्रितोमहीरपो हृषन्तमः ।

तव पूषाभुवत् स च ॥” S. V. II. vi. 4.

“When Indra strongest hero, brought the streams,  
the mighty waters down.

Pushan was standing by his side.”

“गौर्ध्यति मरुता शवसुर्मीता मधीनाम् ।

शुक्ता वङ्गी रथानाम् ॥” S. V. II. vi. 5 ; R. V. viii. 83. 1.

“The cow, the streaming mother of the liberal  
Maruts pours her milk.

Harnessed to draw their chariots on.”

“उपनोहरिभिः युतं याहि मदानां पते ।

उपनो हरिभिः सुतं ॥” S. V. II. vi. 6 : R. V. viii. 82. 31.

“Come, Lord of rapturous joys, to our libation  
with thy bay steeds cow, with the bay steeds  
to the flowing juice !”

“इष्टा होता अस्त्वातेन्द्रं हृषन्तो अधरे अच्छा बस्त्यामो जसा ॥”

S. V. II. vi. 7 ; R. V. viii. 82. 13.

“Presented strengthening gifts have sent Indra  
away at sacrifice.

With might unto thy cleansing bath.”

“आह अहमिदि पितुम्यारिमेधा भृतस्त जप्रह अहं सूर्यं  
इवाजनि ॥” S. V. II. vi. 8 ; R. V. viii. 6. 10.

“I from my father received deep knowledge of  
Eternal Law. I was born like unto the Sun.”

“रेवतीर्जः स्वध मादहेन्द्रे सन्तु वि वाजाः हृषन्तो याभिर्न्देषुम् ॥”

S. V. II. vi. 9 ; R. V. I. 30. 13.

“With Indra splendid feats he owes, rich in all  
strengthening things, wherewith.

Wealthy in food, we may rejoice.”

“सीमः पूषा च चेत तुर्वि सासां सुच्छीनां ।

देवस्ता रथयोहिता ॥” S. V. II. vi. 10..

“Soma and Pushan, kind to him who travels to the gods, provide dwellings all happy and secure.” [Not found in the Rig Veda.]

The second part is less disjointed in structure. Most part of it consists of triplets, three verses, taken from the same hymn of the Rig Veda, though occasionally transposed in order. The following two stanzas from Book V. Chap. I, may be taken as samples :—

“आ प्र द्रव परावतोऽर्वातस्य हृदयह् । मध्यः प्रति प्रथर्मणि ॥”

X. 1. “We make this Indra very strong to strike the mighty Vritra dead, A vigorous hero shall he be.”

“यः इन्द्र चमसेष्वा सोमस्थमूष ते सुतः । पिबेदस्य त्वमौशिषे ॥”

2. “This Indra made for giving gifts, is established mightiest, in strength, bright meet for Soma, found in song.”

“इन्द्र शुभिसु मे इवभक्ते चृतस्य गौमतः । विपीतिं दृसिमन्त्रहि ॥”

3. “By song, as it were, the powerful both, which none may parry, was prepared, Strong and invincible he grew.” [R. V. viii. 82. 7. 9.]

अध्ययोः भद्रिभिः सुतं सोमं पविन जा रुज ।  
पुग्नीयोऽद्वाय पातवे ॥

XI. 1. “Adharyu, to the fitted lead the Soma juice pressed with stones : Make thou it pure for Indra’s drink !”

“तथत्य इन्द्रो अन्धसो देवा मधोर्यन्ते । पवमानस्य महतः ।”

2. “These gods and all the Marut host, Indra, enjoy this juice of thine, This Pavamana’s flowing meath.”

“द्विवः पीयत्वासुतम् सोममिन्द्राय वज्जिणी सुनोता मधुसमम् ॥”

3. "Pour out for Indra, Thunder-armed, the milk  
of heaven, the Soma's juice, Most excellent,  
most rich in sweets." IX. II. 1, 2, 3.

But as we have said the Sama Veda does not throw any fresh light on the various religious movements in India and we may safely pass over it without any further consideration of the subject matter.

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## ATHARVA VEDA.

The last book of the Vedic cannon is the Atharva Veda. It is a collection of 730 hymns containing some 6000 stanzas, divided into 20 books (19 in Whitney's Edition). About one sixth of the mass including two entire books (15 and 16) is written in prose, similar in style and language to the Brahmanas ; the rest is poetry in the usual Vedic metres. Genuine tradition as to the authorship of the hymns, there is none. There is the greatest correspondence between the Atharva Veda and the tenth Mandala of the Rig Veda. Funeral verses are common to the Rig Veda and Atharva Veda.

The compilation of the Atharva Veda is probably later than the other vedas ; for we find verses in the Atharva Veda where all the other three Vēdas are mentioned by name though some of its materials are as old or even older than those of the Rig Veda.

“ऋचं साम यदपार्वते हविरोजो यजुर्बृहम् ।  
एष तस्मात्मा हिंसोद् वेदः पृष्ठः शशौपते ॥” VII. 54. 2.

‘When I have asked Verse (Rik and Chant (Sam) for oblation and force and sacrificial formula (Yajus) for strength, let not therefore this Veda (A. V.), that I have sought, injure me, O Lord of strength.’

Book XV is quite like the Brahmanas in respect of contents and style and it is all in prose.

Book IX forms a supplement to the three grand divisions, and is evidently a later addition.

There is one beautiful ode to the Earth, (Bhumi) in

the Atharva Veda of 63 verses, the first hymn of the 12th book, perfectly natural and giving a broad survey of our planet :

“यस्मां समुद्र उत सिन्धुरपि यस्मामवै ज्ञात्यः संवभूतुः ।  
यस्मामिदं जिवति प्राणदेजम् सा नो भूमिः पूर्वपैष्ठे दधातु ॥”

### XII. 1. 3.

“On whom the ocean and the river, and the waters, on whom food and corn lands came into their being, on whom this all that breathes, moves, and is active, let the earth set us in first.”

The hymns of the Atharva Veda can be classified into three broad divisions, of which the first two are based on the length of the poems, whereas the last has its basis on the unity of subject matter. The first division comprising of books I to VII has in it short hymns on miscellaneous subjects whereas the second, comprising of books VIII to XII, has the longer ones also on miscellaneous subjects. In the third, hymns are grouped according to the unity of subject matter. Thus book XIII consists of hymns to the Ruddy Sun (Rohita), XIV consists of wedding hymns, XV is the book about the Vratya, and XVIII consists of hymns for the dead.

Though the final compilation of the Atharva Veda must have been later than that of the other Vedas, some of its component materials must have been as early as or even earlier than the time of the Rig Veda. It is remarkable that even down to the time of the earlier Upanishads, the Atharva Veda had not been recognised as a canonical scripture. We often meet with the mention of the three Vedas only ; e.g.

“यथा यद्योर्व सः प्रपथ इति ज्ञानवैदं प्रपथे यजुर्वैदं प्रसन्न-

सामवेदं प्रपञ्चे गूत्येष तद्विवरं तद्विवरम् ॥” (Chandogyopanishad)  
III. 15. 7.

“He therefore brought forth by that speech and by that body all what-so-ever exists, the Rig, the Yajur, the Saman, the Metres, the sacrifices, men and animals.”

In the Atharva Veda we come across an altogether different atmosphere from that of the Rig Veda. Though hymns and verses in the spirit of the Rig Veda are scattered here and there, the prevailing atmosphere is that of charms and incantations against sorcerers, Rakshasas, diseases etc. A large number of hymns are for healing diseases with amulets and herbs.

“यदृ दण्डेन यदिष्वा यदृ वारुहीरसा क्षनम् ।  
तथा त्वमसि निष्ठृतिः सेमं निष्ठृधि पूरुषम् ॥” V. 5. 4.

“If by a staff, if by an arrow, or if by a flame a sore is made, of that thou art relief ; relieve thou. (Laksha-plant) this man.”

It would seem that these incantations and charms were the legacies of a primitive civilisation. They might have been practised by primitive Aryans or assimilated from the indigenous inhabitants of India. The belief in and dread of witch-craft (Kritya) and sorcerers are prominent features of the Atharva Veda. The gods of the Rig Veda were sometimes called upon to protect men against these. The various ills of life seem to have been the chief concern of the authors of the Atharva Veda ; and they prescribed remedies against them in the form of amulets and enchantments. There are quite a number of hymns indicating strong belief in amulets and practice of charms.

“अनेनेष्वो मणिना वृत्रमहरनेनासुरान् पराभावयचोक्ती ।  
अनेनाजयद् यावापूर्विवो उमे इसे अनेनाजयत् प्रदिशावतः ॥”

## VIII. 5. 3.

“With this amulet Indra smote Vritra ; with this he, being filled with wisdom, ruined the Asuras ; with this he conquered both heaven and earth here ; with this he conquered the four directions.”

“अथमिद् वै प्रतीवर्त ओजस्वान् संजयो मणिः ।

प्रजां धनं च रक्षतु परिपाणः सुमङ्गलः ॥” VIII. 5. 16.

“Let this back-turning, forcible all-conquering amulet verily defend (our) progeny and riches, a very propitious protection.”

In the first of these extracts, it will be noticed that the use of the amulet is attributed to Indra,\* thus assimilating the practice of enchantments and amulets with the Vedic gods. It was thus perhaps that the Atharva Veda gradually acquired the rank of a Veda. It is well-known as has been already said that for a long time the Atharva Veda was excluded from the Vedic canon.

The original Atharva Veda dealt possibly with the art of enchantments, amulets etc ; but in course of time it assimilated into itself the Vedic Gods who also were invoked to protect against the same evils. Some portions of the other Vedas were incorporated into the Atharva Veda and new verses in the style of the other Vedas were composed and added to it which ultimately secured for it the rank of a Veda.

Most of the Gods of the Rig Veda re-appear in the Atharva Veda ; but there has been a considerable change in their character. The naturalistic glow of the Rig Veda has almost entirely disappeared. Gods like Indra

Agni, Vayu, Rudra have become abstract deities and they are invoked to desroy demons and fiends e. g. :—

“अप प्रगाहेवो अग्नौ रजोहामौव शातमः ।  
दहनप इयाविनो यातुधानान् किमौदिनः ॥  
प्रतिदह यातुधानान् प्रतिदेव किमौदिनः ।  
प्रतीचौष्ण्याः वर्तने संदह यातुधान्यः ॥” I. 28. 1, 2,

“Hither hath come forth God Agni, demon-slayer, disease-expeller, burning away deceivers, sorcerers, and kimidins. Burn against the sorcerers, against the kimidins, O God ; burn up the sorcerers that meet thee, O, black-tracked one.”

“इन्द्र जहि पुमांसं यातुधानमुत स्त्रियं मायथा शाश्वदानाम् ।”

VIII. 4. 24.

“Indra, destroy the demon, male and female ; joying and triumphing in arts of magic.”

Many of the hymns were prayers for the curing of diseases such as consumption, fever, rheumatism, leprosy etc.

“यदग्निरापो अदहत् प्रविश्य यत्राक्षयवन् धर्मदृतो नमासि ।  
तद त आहुः परमं जनित्रं स नः संविद्वान् परि छुद्धिं तप्तवन् ॥”

I. 25. 1.

“When Agni blazed, when he had pierced the waters, whereat the law-observers paid him homage, there, men as ever, was thy loftiest birthplace ; O fever, yielding to our prayer, avoid us.” I. 25. 1.

“आसुरी चक्रो प्रथमेदं किलासभेषजं इदं किलास नाशनम् ।  
अग्नीनश्चत् किलासं सरूपा भक्तत च ॥” I. 24. 2.

“The Asuri made, first of all, this medicine for leprosy, this banisher of leprosy. She banished our leprosy and gave one general colour to the skin.”

“विशासं च पल्लितं च निरितो नाशया एषत् ।

आ त्वा स्त्रो विश्वतां वर्णः परा शङ्कानि पातय ॥” I. 23. 2.

“Expell the leprosy, remove from him the spots and ashy hue ; let thine own colour come to thee. Drive far away the specks of white.”

White leprosy seems to have been very common ; so was consumption, which was very much dreaded. There are a number of verses in the Atharva Veda for curing consumption.

“निर्बलसेतः प्र पर्वशुगः शिशुको यथाः” VI. 14. 3.

“Begone consumption, hence away, like a young foul that runs at speed.”

“यद्धां पाणिम्यामङ्गुलिभ्यो नखेभ्यो वि द्वहामि ते ।

अङ्गे अङ्गे सोनि लीनि यस्ते पर्वणि पर्वणि ।

यस्तं त्वचस्त ते वयं कश्यपस्त वौदहेण विष्वञ्च वि द्वहामसि ॥”

II. 33. 6-7.

“I banish thy consumption, from thy hands, thy fingers and thy nails. In every member, every hair, in every joint wherein it lies, we with the exercising spell of Kasyapa drive far away consumption, settled in thy skin.”

“यस्त हेतोः प्र चवते यस्तः कर्णतः आस्तः ।

सदं श्रीर्वण्यं ते रोग वहिनिर्मन्त्रयामहे ॥” IX. 8. 3.

“So that all malady that wrings thy brow we charm away with this, our spell, so that consumption may depart forth, from thine ears and thy mouth.”

“यो गोदु यस्तः पुरुषेऽु यस्तासेन लं साक्षमवराङ् परे हि ।  
अवश्यं सदृशं साक्षात्यां करेणागुकरेण च । यस्तं च सदः ते भैं तो शत्युं  
च निरजामसि ॥” VIII. 2. 1, 2.

“Together with consumption in the cattle consumption in our men. Go hence, go southward. With this we charge and banish, all consumptive malady and death.”

“त्राय त्वामिमं पुरवै यक्षाद् देवेवितादधि ।

याती वौद्धिपता एविद्वा माता समुद्रो नूसं वौहधां बभूव ॥”

VIII. 7. 2.

“This man, let them deliver for consumption, which the gods have sent. The father of these herbs was heaven their mother earth, the sea their roots.”

Evidently these Mantras were uttered in tying spells and amulets which consisted of various kinds of plants, herbs, pieces of wood, shell etc. e. g.

“वर्सै म ग्रस्यं मणिः फालाचारः करिष्यति ॥” X. 6. 2.

“This amulet of citron-wood shall make for me a trusty shield.”

“हिरण्यगत्यं मणिः अद्वा यज्ञं महो दधत् । गृहे व्रस्तु नीतिणिः ॥” X. 6. 4.

“This amulet decked with chain of gold shall give faith, sacrifice and might and dwell as guest within our house.”

“सासेन मणिना जटिणेत मनोषिणा ।

६)

प्रजैवं सर्वाः पृतना विघ्नो हभि रक्षसः ॥” VIII. 5. 8.

“With amulet of Sraktya wood as with a thoughtful Rishi's aid, in every fight have I prevailed, I smite the force and Rakshasas.”

Quite a number of hymns of the Atharva Veda are meant to be charms against sorcerers, witches. etc.

“क्षत्या क्षत्याहने देवा निक्षमिव प्रतिसुखत ।

पुगः क्षत्या क्षत्या क्षाने हस्त गृह्ण परा शय ।

क्षत्या: सन्तु क्षत्या क्षाते शपथः शपथौयते ।

\* “क्षत्येरय इव वर्ततां क्षत्या क्षत्या क्षते पुगः ॥” V. 14. 3-5.

“Bind like a golden chain, O god,his witch-craft on the sorcerer. Take thou his sorcery by the hand and to the sorcerer lead it back. Let witch-craft, like a well-naved car, roll back upon the sorcerer.” \*

“करणाहशमिव संगयन् छत्रा ज्ञात्वा क्षत्री पृष्ठम् ।

“चतुर्मनस्त्र दुर्बादेः पृष्ठरिपि चूपाच्चन् ॥” XIX. 45. 1.

“As debt from debt repay and send, a sorcery to the sorcerer's house. Split, slave ! the cruel villain's ribs, whose evil eye bewitches us.”

“यदाक्षरं द्रैवकुडे जातं छिमवतस्याति ।

“यातुं च सर्वान् जाभ्य यत्सर्वांश्च यातुधाय्यः ॥” IV. 9. 9.

“Sprung from the snowy mountain's side, this ointment of the three peaked-hill, crushes and rends all sorcerers and every witch and sorceress.”

“देवानामस्य ज्ञानं बभूव तदामत्वचर ल्यप्त्वान्तः ।

तत् ते बध्नाम्याशुवे वर्चसे बलाय दोर्बायुत्वाय

शसश्चादाय काशनि स्वाभि रक्षतु ॥” IV. 10. 7.

“Bone of the goats, became the pearl's shell-mother :  
Endow e l with a soul it moveth in the waters.

I bind this on thee for life, strength and vigour, for long life lasting through a hundred autumns. May the pearl's mother keep and guard thee safely.”

“समुद्राजातो मणिर्ब्रह्माजातो दिवाकारः ।

सोऽक्षाम्बर्वतः पातुः हे या देवासुरेभ्यः ॥” IV. 10. 5.

“From ocean sprang the amulet, from Vritra sprang the Lord of day. May this protect us round about from shafts of God and Asuro.”

There are again a number of hymns which are supposed to be efficacious in winning the love of a man for a woman and of a woman for a man ; e.g. :—

“ममेदसस्त्वं केवली नग्नासी कौर्तव्याच्चन् ।

यदि वसि तिरोजनं यदि वा नवस्तिरः ।

तूर्यं ह मद्धा लामोषधिर्विष्वेव व्यानयत् ॥” VII. 36, 405.

"Thou shalt be mine and only mine and never mention other dames. If thou art far away, beyond the rivers, far away from men, this herb shall seem to bind thee fast and bring thee back my prisoner."

**“अभित्वामनुजातेन दधामि मम वाससा ।**

**यथासी मम केवलो नान्या साकौर्तयाश्च ॥” VII. 37. 1.**

"With this my robe inherited from Manu, I envelope thee, so that, thou mayst be all mine own, and give no thought to other dames."

**“रथजितां राथजितेयौनामप्सरसामयं स्वरः ।**

**देवाः प्रहिष्टुत स्वरमसौ मामनुशोचतु ॥” VI. 130. 1.**

"This is the Apsarasas' love-spell, the conquering, irresistible ones, send this spell forth, ye deities ; let him consume with love of me."

**“निश्चोर्षतो नि पत्तत आयो नि तिरामि ते ।**

**देवाः प्रहिष्टुत स्वरमसौ मामनुशोचतु ॥” VI. 131. 1.**

"Down upon thee from head to foot ; I draw the pangs of longing love. Send forth the charm, ye deities ; let him consume with love of me."

**“शुच्छतु मयि ते छद्यमयो शुच्छत्वास्थम् ।**

**आयो नि शुच्छ मां कामेनाथो शुच्छास्था चर ॥” VI. 139. 1.**

"Let thy heart wither for my love, and let thy mouth be dry for me. Parch and dry up with longing, go with lips that love of me hath dried."

**“आहं खिदामि ते मनो राजास्तुष्टगमिष्व ।**

**दोषक्षिणं यथा लृणं मयि ते वेन्नतां मनः ॥” VI. 102. 2.**

"I, as the shaft-horse draws the mare beside him, draw thee to myself. Like grass that storm and wind have rent, so be thy mind attached to me."

“वाञ्छने तन्वं पादौऽवाञ्छस्त्री वाञ्छ सदयो ।  
 अद्यौ हृषप्रसन्न्याः केशा मा ते कामेन शुचन्तु ॥  
 मम त्वा दोषणि स्त्रिं छाणोमि इदयश्चिष्म ।  
 यथा मम क्रतावसौ मम चित्तसुपायसि ॥  
 यासां नाभिरारोहणे इदि षंवननं ग्रातम् ।  
 गवोष्टुतस्थ मातरोभ्युं सं वानयन्तु मे ॥” VI. 9. 1, 2, 3.

“Desire my body, love my feet, love thou mine eyes and love my legs. Let both thine eyes and hair, fond girl ! be dried and parched through love of me. I make thee hang upon mine arm, I make thee lie upon my heart. Thou yeildest to my wish, that thou mayest be submissive to my will. May they whose kisses are a bond, a love-charm laid within the heart, mothers of butter may the cows incline that maid to love of me.”

Thus it will be seen that the prevailing atmosphere in the Atharva Veda is that of sorcery, witchcraft, amulets, spells and charms. If by religious ideas, only spiritual elements are meant, the Atharva Veda is of little value to our present inquiry ; but for a correct idea of the faith and belief which swayed at least a considerable section of people in the Vedic times, it has its value and place in the history of religious development in India.

There are indeed a number of hymns which are concerned with the ordinary domestic and social rites and ceremonies ; such as the marriage ceremonies (XIV. 1 and 2), funeral ceremonies (XVIII. 1, 2, 3, and 4), consecration of a new house (IX. 3. 7 and 8 ; VII. 60. 4), election of a King (IV. 22. 1 ; IV. 8. 1). But some of these have been taken from the Rig Veda, perhaps to give the collection of the Atharva, the character of and place among the Vedas,



## THE BRAHMANAS.

Next to the Vedas we come across a class of literature, called the Brahmanas, which are also of a considerable antiquity and held in great veneration. They are considered, in Hindu tradition, as parts of the original revelation and of co-ordinate authority with the Vedic Samhitas. But in intrinsic value, character and form they differ from the Vedas as the North Pole from the South Pole. While the Vedic Samhitas are mainly and essentially poetical compositions of more or less beauty, being natural out-pourings of poetic minds in language often reaching to a great height of an artistic expression, the Brahmanas are dull, wearisome and artificial vapourings of the dogmatic and sacerdotal ingenuity. They are not only prose in form, but are utterly prosaic in their contents and spirit. The translator of one of the Brahmanas in the *Sacred Books of the East Series* says :— “In the whole range of literature few works are probably less calculated to excite the interest of any outside the very limited number of specialists, than the ancient theological writings of the Hindus, known by the name Brahmanas. For wearisome prolixity of exposition, characterised by dogmatic assertion and flimsy symbolism rather than by serious reasoning, those works are perhaps not equalled anywhere.” S. B. E. Vol. xii. Introduction p. ix. The Brahmanas evidently indicate a great falling off from the mental vigour, freshness, and originality of the Vedic Samhitas. Evidently there was a long interval between the period when the hymns of

the Rig Veda were sung and that in which the Brahmanas were composed. The marked falling off in originality, imagination, and power can be explained only by a long lapse of time during which the mental vigour of the race had deteriorated considerably. There are innumerable indications in the Brahmanas themselves to corroborate this view. The geographical position indicated in the Brahmanas is different from that in the Rig Veda. It is clear that by this time the Aryans had moved as far as the eastern districts of Magadha. Satapatha Brahmana I. iv. 1. "Now-a-days there are many Brahmanas to the east of it (river Sadanira)", which according to Sayana is another name for the Kasatiya. The gradual advance of the Aryans eastwards was marked by considerable dislike and prejudice ; and it must have been the growing pressure of population which forced the Aryans to move further east and south. For a time the river Sadanira marked the extreme eastern boundary of the Aryan settlement. The country to the east of the river seems to have been under ban. At the time of the formation of the Satapatha Brahmana this ban was removed and the Aryans had begun to settle on the other side of the Sadanira. "At that time it (the land east of the Sadanira) was very uncultivated, very marshy, because it had not been tasted by Agni Vaiswanara. Now-a-days it is very cultivated, for the Brahmanas have caused (Agni) to taste it through sacrifices." S. B. I. iv. 1. 15. 16. Max Muller in his History of Sanskrit literature justly remarks : "The facts of so many authorities being quoted by name in these works show that the Brahmanas exhibit the accumulated thoughts of a long succession of early theologians and philosophers.

But the very earliest of the sages follow a train of thought which gives clear evidence of decrying religion. The Brahmanas presuppose not only a complete collection of ten Mandalas of the Rig Veda, not only the establishment of a most complicated ceremonial, not only the distribution of the ceremonial offices among three or four classes of priests, but a complete break in the primitive tradition of the Aryan settlers of India. At the time when the law was laid down about the employment of certain hymns at certain parts of the sacrifice, the original meaning of those hymns and the true conception of the gods to whom they were addressed, had been lost. The collection of the Rig Veda Samhita must no doubt have been complete long before the age which led to the composition of the Brahmanas. The transition from a natural worship to an artificial ceremonial may take place gradually. It had taken place long before the Brahmana period. But there is throughout the Brahmanas such a complete misunderstanding of the original intention of the Vedic hymns that we can hardly understand how such an estrangement could have taken place, unless there had been at some time or other a sudden and violent break in the chain of tradition."

The Brahmanas profess to supply authoritative direction for the various sacrifices and expositions of the meaning and significance of every ceremony and symbol connected with them. They are entirely sacerdotal in aim and outlook. The writers of the Brahmanas evidently knew of no interest in life except the proper performance of sacrifices. In the Rig Veda the sacrifice was subordinate to poetic fancy. Though many of the hymns must have been written directly for the purpose

of sacrifices, there is an unmistakable glow of genius spread over them. They are undoubtedly creations of considerable poetical merit. There is a stamp of originality and freshness in them which secures for them an honourable place among the genuine poetical literature of humanity. But the Brahmanas are utterly devoid of poetic and artistic merit ; the age in which they were produced seems to have entirely lost the poetic vision, the faculty divine, of the Rig Veda. There is hardly any new idea in the Brahmanas. They give the most elaborate and mechanical instructions for the minute details of sacrifices with fanciful explanations for each particular act or order. The nature of the contents of the Brahmanas will be understood from a few examples. The Satapatha Brahmana, laying down the procedure of the special preliminary rites of the New Moon sacrifice says : "He (the *Adhwaryu*) drives the calves away (from the cows) with a *parna* branch. The reason why he drives them with a *parna* branch is this. When the Gayatri flew towards Soma (moon), a footless archer aiming at her while she was carrying him off, severed one of the feathers (*parna*) either of the Gayatri or of King Soma ; and on falling down it became a *parna* tree (*palasa*) ; whence its name *parna*." S. B. I. viii. 1. 1. Or, take the following passage from the instructions for *Diksha* into Agnishtoma sacrifice : "The right eye he anoints first : for in human practice the left (eye is anointed) first, but with the gods (it is done) thus." He anoints it with the text, 'Thou art the eye-ball of Vritra, for Vritra's eye-ball it indeed is ;—eye-giving thou art give me the eye ;' in this there is nothing obscure. The right eye he anoints once with the sacrificial formula and

once silently ; and the left one he anoints once with the formula and twice silently ; thus he makes the left (or upper) one superior. And the reason why he anoints five times is that the sacrifice is of equal measure with the year : he thus obtains possession of the latter in five (divisions), and therefore he anoints five times" S. B. III. i. 1. 3. 14. 17. Or we may take the following passage as a specimen of the meterials expressing the voluminous mass of the Brahmanas : "Having then called for the (*Agnidhra's*) *Sraushat*, he does not elect the *Hotri* ; for this being a sacrifice to the Manes, he does\* not elect the *Hotri*, but he should consign the *Hotri* to the Manes. He says 'Hotri seat thyself' and takes his seat. The *Hotri* having sat down on the *Hotri's* 'seat, urges (the Adhwaryu) to proceed ; and thus urged, the Adhwaryu takes the two spoons and steps across to the West (of the fire) and having stepped across and called for the *Sraushat* he says 'pronounce the offering prayer to the kindling sticks.' He performs four fore-offerings omitting the one to the *Barhis* ; for the *Barhis* means *offspring*, and therefore he performs the four fore-offerings without the one to the *Barhis*, lest he should consign his offering to the fathers." S. B. II. vi. 1. 25. As we proceed we shall have further illustrations of the nature of the Brahmanas.

The fact is that by the time the Brahmanas were composed the simple Vedic sacrifices had greatly increased in number and complexity. The original sacrificial manual of the Yajur Veda no longer sufficed. Various new and cumbersome details had grown up which could not be remembered by individual priests, and so it was necessary to collect

them together ; thus the Brahmanas were composed ; and as there were different schools of priests with varying procedure for the sacrifices, there were several Brahmanas. The intellectual powers of the race were now employed in elaborating the details of the sacrifices and inventing fanciful explanations for them instead of original creation.

Prof. Eggeling remarks that the Brahmanas "represent the intellectual activity of a sacerdotal caste which, by turning to account the religious instincts of a gifted and naturally devout race, had succeeded in transforming a primitive worship of the powers of nature into a highly artificial system of sacrificial ceremonies and was ever intent on deepening and extending its hold on the minds of the people, by surrounding its own vocation with the halo of sanctity and divine inspiration." We need not assume any deliberate design on the parts of the priestly caste as insinuated by Prof. Eggeling, for, the growing complexity was a natural outcome of ceremonialism. However, the Brahmanas represent the age in which ceremonialism had taken entire possession of the mind. Sacrifice had become the chief thing ; even the gods had become subordinate to the sacrifice. The sacrifice was not for the gods so much as the gods are for the sacrifice. In the Brahmanas the sacrifices, which were originally the means to an end, viz., the pleasing of the gods, had become the main concern, the be-all and end-all of life. It is distinctly stated that the gods owed their supremacy to sacrifice : "The sacrifice fled away from the gods. The gods called out after it, 'Listen to us, come back to us.' It replied "so be it," and returned to the gods and with what had thus returned to them, the gods

worshipped and by worshipping with it they became the gods they now are." S. B. I. v. 2. 6. "Thus by offering (that cake to Agni and Soma), Indra became what Indra now is." Such, then, is the significance of the Full Moon offerings ; and "he who, knowing this performs the Full Moon offerings in this wise, attains the same state of prosperity, becomes thus endowed with glory, becomes such a consumer of food." S. B. I. vi. 3. 15. "Verily by means of the great oblation the gods slew Vritra ; by it they gained the supreme authority, which they now wield." S. B. I. vi. 2. 1. The gods did not acknowledge that Indra was the first and the greatest among the gods. "Indra said to Brihaspati, 'do thou make me sacrifice, the Twelve-days' sacrifice.' Brihaspati performed for him the Twelve-days' sacrifice. Then the gods acknowledged Indra as the first and the greatest among the gods." Aitareya Brahmana II. ii. 2. 14. This tendency of the glorification was carried so far as to say, "May the sacrifice prosper through sacrifice." S. B. V. ii. 14.

With the importance attached to sacrifices their number and complexity increased considerably. In the Brahmana period there seemed to have been a continuous round of sacrifices extending over days, weeks, months or years. In the place of the simple Soma offering of the Rig Veda many kinds of offerings came to be substituted. Clarified butter seems to have become the common article of sacrifice. "Butter doubtless is palatable to the gods." S. B. I. vii. 2. 10. Rice-cakes, goats, horses, and cows are also offered in sacrifices. Human sacrifice also is mentioned in the Satapatha Brahmana. "A man (puru-sha) be slaughtered first, for man is the first of animals", S. B. V. ii. 1. 18.

Minute trivial details regarding the procedure of sacrifices grew in importance. Inevitable sacerdotal punctiliousness followed ; slightest deviation from the ordinary practice came to be looked upon as calamitous. Thus the *Satapatha Brahmana* states that the priest must pour the butter together, without his spoons touching each other. "If he were to touch (the one spoon with the other) he would touch the sacrificer with his spiteful enemy ; he would touch the consumer with the one to be consumed ; for this reason he pours (the butter) together without touching. He holds the *guha* over (the Upabrit). Thereby he keeps the sacrificer above his spiteful enemy, he keeps the consumer above the one to be consumed ; for this reason he holds the *guha* over (the Upabhrita)." S. B. I. v. 3. 19-20. Or again, "Here now some make (the name of) the deity precede the 'may he offer (ayat)'.....but let him not do this, for those who make the deity precede the 'may he offer,' violate the proper order at the sacrifice." I. vii. 3. 12. Or, take this, "Here now according to some the Adhwaryu passes the Ahavaniya on the Eastside. Let him, however, not do this ; for were he to walk on the East, he would be outside the sacrifice." S. B. I. vii. 3. 15.

With the glorification of sacrifice, Agni, the god most closely connected with sacrifices, comes to the front. He becomes the first among the gods, the chief god. "He was created first by Prajapati" S. B. II. ii. 4. 2. "To Agni is to be first offered sacrificial offering" S. B. II. ii. 2. 2. Similarly the Aitareya Brahmana piecing up a phrase from the Rig Veda makes Agni the first among the gods. "अग्निसुखं पथम् देवजनाना" A. B. I. i. 1. 1. The sacrificial fire becomes the holy of holies, similar to the sacred *ark* of

the Jews. Even the gods look upon it with awe: "They (the gods) beheld the immortal Agnadhaya (consecrated)." S. B. II. ii. 2. 9. The gods owe their divinity to the worship of Agni. They were originally mortals like the Asuras, but having established the worship of Agni become immortal. "The gods then established that (fire) in their inmost soul, and become immortal and unconquerable, and overcome their mortal conquerable enemies." S. B. II. ii. 2. 14. Even Varuna, one of the most ancient of the Vedic gods, is made to owe his position to Agni. "Now Varuna established this fire being desirous of sovereignty. He obtained sovereignty." S. B. II. ii. 3. 1. The worship of Agni becomes the elementary duty of every Aryan. "Even as he is born from father and mother so he is born from fire. But he who offers not the Agnihotra, verily he does not come into life at all; therefore the Agnihotra should by all means be offered." S. B. II. ii. 4. 8.

Agnihotra sacrifice has become the ordinary daily worship of every house-holder. Agni is looked upon as the most intimate friend and guardian. How touching is the familiar friendly intercourse with the fire-altar! Whenever the house-holder sets out on a journey beyond the village boundary he approaches the house-hold fire to take leave of it as of the father or a friend. "Now when he is about to set out on a journey he approaches first the Garhapatya and thereupon the Ahavaniya. The Garhapatya he approaches with the text: 'thou art friendly to man, protect my offspring.' He (Agni Garhapatya) truly is the guardian for the offspring; and therefore now he makes over to him his offsprings for protection. He then approaches the Ahavaniya with "Thou art worthy of praise, protect my cattle. He truly is the guardian of

cattle, and therefore now he makes over to him his cattle for protection. Thereupon he walks or drives off ; and having got as far as what he considers to be the boundary, he breaks silence, and when he returns from his journey he maintains silence from the moment he sees what he considers to be the boundary. And even though there be a king inside (one's house) one must not go to him (or any other person before one has rendered homage to the fires). He first approaches the Aha-vaniya fire and thereupon the Garhapatya." S. B. II. iv. 1. 3. 7.

With the glorification and growing complexity of sacrifices the position of the Brahmin is securely established in the social scale. In the Brahmanas we find the caste system well established. The three upper castes the Brahmin, the Kshatriya and the Vaisya compose the Aryan community. Though the Sudra is recognised as a separate caste he has hardly any place in the Aryan community. "There are four castes, the Brahmin, the Rajanya, the Vaisya, and the Sudra." S. B. II. i. 1. 9.<sup>\*</sup> But beyond this mere mention as a separate caste, the Sudra does not receive any further recognition. On the other hand he is contemptuously left aside on all social and ceremonial occasions. The Sudra may not enter into a place of sacrifice. "Not every one may enter it (the Agnishtoma sacrificial enclosure) but only a Brahmin, or a Rajanya, or a Vaisya, for, these are able to sacrifice." S. B. II. i. 9. In the consecration of a new king, (S. B. V. iii. 5. 10-14) the Brahmin, the Kshatriya and the Vaisya take part, but no part is assigned to the Sudra. The Sudra does not count for anything in the Aryan social system. "As much as

are the Brahmin, the Kshatriya and the Vaisya, so much is the universe." S. B. II. i. 4. 12.

Caste had already become hereditary, not entirely professional. There were Brahmins who were not sacrificial priests. "Be they sacrificial priests or not are residing in his family (Kula)." S. B. II. i. 4. 4.

The struggle between the Brahmin and Kshatriya has been fairly set to rest. The Brahmins have agreed to renounce sovereignty altogether in exchange for the recognition of their supreme place in the social system : "un-suited for kingship is the Brahmin" S. B. V. i. 1. 2. But this temporal loss was set off with a corresponding spiritual gain. Almost a divine honour is paid to the priestly office. The Brahmins are actually called gods. "Verily there are two kinds of gods; for indeed the gods are gods and the Brahmins who have studied and teach the sacred lore are the human gods. The sacrifice of these is divided into two kinds. Oblations constitute the sacrifice to the gods, and gifts to the priests, the human gods, the Brahmins who have studied and teach sacred lore..... Both these gods when gratified, place him in a state of bliss." S. B. V. iii. 3. 11. The Brahmin is placed above the jurisdiction of the king's authority. "This man, O ye (people) is your king; Soma is the king of Brahmins. He thereby causes everything here to be food for him (the king); the Brahmin alone he excepts." S. B. V. iii. 3. 12.

The Brahmanas provide for the means of subsistence to the priestly caste. Great importance is attached to the priest's fee at the sacrifice ; we have already seen that the priests' fee is of equal efficacy with the offering to the gods in securing happiness to the sacrificer. Without an

adequate fee to the priests the sacrifice is incomplete ; whereas with an adequate fee to the priests all the defects conscious or unconscious of the sacrifice, are made up. "Whatever, therefore, fails in this sacrifice, that he now again invigorates by means of gifts to the priests ; whereupon the sacrifice becomes successful ; for this reason he makes gifts to the priests. He may give six (cows), for six seasons indeed there are in the year, and in the sacrifice, Prajapati is the year ; thus as great as the sacrifice, as large as its extent is, by so many (gifts, dakshinas) does he thereby invigorate it. He may give twelve, for twelve months there are in the year..... He may give twenty-four, for twenty-four half months there are in the year. Such is the measure of the priests' fee ; but he may give more according to his faith."

S. B. II. ii. 2. 2-5. Gold is also given in fee to the priests. "The priests' fee for this sacrifice consists of gold."

S. B. II. ii. 3. 28. Priesthood has evidently developed into a profession. There are evidences of the natural jealousy among the members of the profession. The Satapatha Brahmanas enjoin amity between the officiating priests in a sacrifice : "And where the officiating priests thus practise sacrifice with a perfect mutual understanding between them, there everything works regularly, and no hitch occurs : therefore it is in this way that the sacrifice must be nursed." S. B. I. v. 2. 11.

Though the chief contents of the Brahmanas consist of trivial minute directions about sacrificial rites and dull fanciful elucidation of words and sentences of the Mantras, they are of considerable importance in the development of Indian religious thought in as much as many of the conceptions and practices of later Hinduism are to be found

in their germ in the Brahmanas. The Brahmanas are as much commentaries on the Vedic religion, as they are fore-runners of the Pauranic religion. They form the connecting link between the Vedas and the Puranas. Many of the legends of the Puranas may be traced to the fragmentary myths scattered in the Brahmanas.

The later Hindu conception of the trinity, the God as creator, preserver, and destroyer has taken a more developed and definite shape in the Brahmanas. Prajapati has grown more distinct in form and importance. In the many legends about creation abounding in the Brahmanas, Prajapati is invariably the creative agency. He is not only the creator, but has already acquired the position of the chief among the gods. The gods repair to him for guidance and advice.

The position of Vishnu also has been magnified in the Brahmanas.

The sources of most of the cosmogenies of the Puranas are like-wise to be found in the Brahmanas.

The Asuras have assumed the character of legendary being as in the Puranas. In the Rig Veda they are despised enemies of the Aryans, evidently the indigenous inhabitants of the lands whom the new settlers had to fight and conquer. Even in the Yajur Veda, they are savage tribes, though invested with much fanciful characteristics.

But in the Brahmanas the Asuras have become mythical creatures, semi-divine in origin and characters, who, claiming equality with the gods, defied and often fought successfully with them. "The gods and the Asuras, both of them sprang from Prajapati, were once contending for this sacrifice." S. B. I. v. 3. 2 and I. v. 4. 6. "The Devas in ancient times having conquered

the Asuras, took possession of the heavens above.”  
Aitareya Brahmana III. xiv. 4.

Thus the Brahmanas, though marking of a great falling off from the originality and vigour of the Vedic Samhitas, have a considerable importance in the popular Religion of India. They constitute the link between the Vedic and the later Pauranic Religions.

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## CHAPTER IX.

# THE UPANISHADS.

The next great land mark in the religious development of India is to be found in a group of books of exceeding importance called the Upanishads.

In boldness of conception, depth of thought, beauty of expression the Upanishads are a remarkable product of the human mind. They are a contribution of supreme importance not only to the religious thought of India, but have an exalted and abiding value in the religious literature of the world.

The name, Upanishad, which is of high antiquity, has been diversely interpreted. According to Sankara "the Upanishad is formed by *Upa+ni+sud+kwip*, meaning that which destroys ignorance by revealing the knowledge of the supreme spirit and cutting off the bonds of *Avidya* which is the cause of *Samsara*, and hence it comes to knowledge of Brahman. A consensus of opinion recognises a secret and occult significance in it. The teachings of the Upanishads were not current among the common people, at least in early times, but were confined to a chosen circle of superior thought and culture. Though they are a natural and logical development on the earlier ideas of the Vedas and the Brahmanas, the Upanishads are more of the nature of a side-current than the main march of the national mind. While the vast multitude of the Aryan people continued to find their satisfaction in the Vedic cult and delight in Brahmanical legends ultimately developing into the mythology of Puranas, the deeper spirits of the race, away from the busy haunts and

superficial fancies of the popular mind evolved this sublime conception of the universe. The key-note of the Upanishads is the pregnant thought that this wonderful and varied universe is at bottom one undivided whole and that its underlying essence is Spirit. All Upanishads try to bring out and emphasise this supreme idea. It contributes a sure test of the genuineness of an Upanishad.

In later times many compositions pretended to belong to the Upanishadic literature. It is easy to understand how later authors, anxious to secure for their works the authority and importance of the Upanishads, gave them the name and form of these ancient and justly revered books which were looked upon as parts of the original revelation. And in many cases the imitation was so clever that it is not easy to distinguish them from the genuine Upanishads. Thus in the later uncritical period many treatises of inferior and alien character passed on as Upanishads. It is essential that out of the heterogeneous collections which ordinarily pass under that name, the original and genuine Upanishads should be singled out. The largest collection, which includes 108 different treatises is known as the Muktika collection and is of Southern origin. There is another collection called the Narayana collection which includes only 52 books. The celebrated English Orientalist Colebrooke, in his collection also admitted 52 books, not quite identical with those of the Narayana collection, to the dignity of the Upanishads. As late as the 17th century only fifty different compositions had acquired the rank of the Upanishads. We have a very interesting and absolutely authoritative evidence on this point. Darasukho, the eldest son of Shahjahan and heir apparent to the Mogul Empire, who was however

deprived of empire and life by his unscrupulous younger brother Aurangzeb, was a great admirer of the Upanishads and had them translated into Arabic under his immediate supervision. This collection consisted of fifty different books.

The Upanishads originally formed parts of the concluding chapters of the Brahmanas, Aranyakas and some of the Vedic Samhitas. Hence they were called the Vedanta. Even as late as the seventh century there does not seem to have been any attempt to collect them together in one place from their original places. Sankara, the great commentator of the Upanishads, does not appear to have before him a collection of the Upanishads. He refers to them as forming the concluding parts of their respective Brahmanas. But long before this the unity in the subject matter of these various treatises was recognised. One of the most important books in Indian religious and philosophical literature is called the Brahma Sutra. It is a digest of the essential teachings of the Upanishads. It is possibly as old as third century B. C. The Brahma Sutra, may, with confidence, be said to refer to the following ten Upanishads : the Chhandogya, the Brihadaranyaka, the Kathaka, the Taittiriya, the Kaushitaki, the Mundaka, the Prasna, the Swetashwatara, the Aitareya, and the Jabala. In his celebrated commentary on the Brahma Sutras, Sankara can be shown to have quoted from the following fourteen Upanishads : (the figures attached indicate the number of quotations)—Chhandogya 809, Brihadaranyaka 565, Taittiriya 142, Mundaka 129, Kathaka 103, Kaushitaki 88, Swetaswatara 52, Prasna 31, Aitareya 22, Jabala 13, Mahānarayana 9, Isa 8, Paingi 6, Kena 5. Sankara, however,

wrote separate commentaries on the following Upanishads only : Isa, Kena, Katha, Prasna, Mundaka, Mandukya, Taittariya, Aitareya, Chandogya, Brihadaranyaka and Swetasvatara.

Chronologically as well as in sequence of development of ideas, the Upanishads follow the Brahmanas. Their original place at the end of the Brahmanas correctly indicates their position in the evolution of Hindu religious ideas. It was towards the close of the Brahmana period that this wonderful literature began to make its appearance. The deeper spirits of the Aryan race could no longer be satisfied with the faith and worship of the Gods of the Vedas and the Brahmanas. The Upanishads, though traditionally looked upon as a part of the Vedic literature, are really a protest against the Vedic cult. We have seen that the Rishis of the Vedas saw behind the universe a number of gods and the Brahmanas laid down detailed instructions for the worship of these gods. The chief topic of the Upanishads on the other hand is the unity of godhead. The movement of thought towards monotheism apparent towards the latter part of the Rig Veda becomes firm and determined in the Upanishads, one and all of which proclaim in a most emphatic manner the unity of God, who is called the Brahman or the Atman. At first the Aryans had postulated separate deities behind each group of physical phenomena that awakened their interest ; the sun was a god, there was a god of wind, of rain and so on. But with closer acquaintance with nature and deeper insight, they realised that they were all inter-connected ; they were not really different and independent deities but the diverse manifestations of the one and the same power. Thus the polytheism

of the Rig Veda gave place to the monotheism of the Upanishads. It was recognised that it was the One God who was in the fire and water, in the shrub and the forest tree, indeed pervaded the entire universe: “यो देवोऽमौ योऽप्सु यो विश्वं भुवनमाविवेष, य ओषधिषु यो वनस्पतिषु तस्मै देवाय नमो नमः । Swetasevatara Upanishad. II. 17. The point of view is altogether changed. In the Rig Veda the external universe stirred the imagination of the Rishis ; it was the sun, the sky, the clouds, the dawn, the fire, which awakened their deepest wonder and to them they offered their oblations and sang hymns of praise. But in the Upanishads we find that the Aryan mind is most deeply impressed with the mysteries of the inner world. It is no longer the grandeur of the physical world, but the mysteries of the human mind that absorbed the attention of the *Rishis*. This is a very natural development. In the infancy of the Aryan thought the striking phenomena of the outer world first arrested attention according to the known laws of psychology. Thought had not yet learnt to turn upon itself, introspection had not yet developed. But in course of time with the progress of thought the Aryan mind was impressed with the marvels of the inner world, and henceforth the chief centre of interest was transferred from without to within. “Two things in the world,” declared the great German philosopher Immanuel Kant “fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the oftener and more steadily we reflect on them,—the starry heavens without and the moral law within.” In the Vedic period the Hindu mind found the manifestation of God in the starry heavens, whereas in the age of the Upanishads it saw God ‘within’. The

Upanishads speak of God constantly as आत्मा, the in-dwelling Spirit. By a still bolder march of thought the human soul was identified with the World Spirit, and *Atman* became the common appellation for God.

The Upanishads reveal to us an age of intense intellectual unrest. Questions of profound importance had already begun to absorb the mind of at least a section of the Aryan people. A very high standard of culture had apparently been attained. There were many eminent teachers scattered over the Gangetic plains who turning away from the glamour of the world, spent their lives in the study of the deeper problems of life. Inquirers from distant places would repair to them for instruction, and spend years in their company as members of their household. Thus a system of education had grown up and successive generations of scholars were trained, who diffused knowledge and kept up a high standard of culture.

Thus we are told in the Chandogya Upanishad that Satyakama Jabala went to Haridrumata Goutama and begged to be taken as a pupil. "स ह चारिद्रुमतं गौतममेत्योवाच ब्रह्मचर्यं भगवति वरस्याम्युपेयां भगवत्समिति ।" Ch. Upanishad, IV. iv. 3. "He (Satyakama) having approached Haridrumata Goutama said : I have come to the venerable one with a view to spend the period of discipleship." Incidentally this interesting story shows that though caste system had already been established, discerning teachers did not refuse to accept pupils of inferior birth. For Satyakama was the offspring of an irregular connection of a maid-servant with an unknown person. When Satyakama prior to his departure from home asked his mother Jabala about his parentage she replied "My dear, I do

not know to what family thou belongest; in my youth when as a maid servant I served many, I got thee; so I do not know to what family thou belongest. My name is Jabala, and thy name is Satyakama, so when asked tell that thou art Satyakama Jabala." The teacher to whom Satyakama went was highly satisfied with the frankness of the mother and the child, and readily accepted him as a disciple.

Similarly Uddalaka Aruni, another great teacher mentioned in the Chhandogya Upanishad, directs his son to go to a teacher for instruction. There lived once Swetaketu Aruneya. To him his father said : 'Swetaketu, go to the house of a teacher, for there is none belonging to our family, O son, who has not studied (Veda), and is merely like a kinsman of Brahmanas.' The most famous of the teachers of the age of the Upanishads was undoubtedly Yajnavalkya, whose teachings constitute the greatest part of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. There used to be frequent discussions between these teachers on important questions.

The quest of the truth was not confined to the sages in the seclusion of forests, but had penetrated into the courts of kings as well. There were kings who took a keen interest in the deep questions discussed in the Upanishads. There are passages which even go to prove that the deeper problems of the Upanishads originated with the Kshatriyas from whom the Brahmins learned them. Thus the Chandogya Upanishad says that Swetaketu and his father Uddalaka Aruni received instruction from Prabhavana Jaibali, king of the Panchalas. Swetaketu had gone to the Court of the king, rather puffed up with the idea

that he had learnt everything ; but a few questions of the king disillusioned him and so he returned to his father and teacher deeply mortified and said, "That fellow of a Kshatriya asked me five questions, and I could not answer one of them." The father replied, "My son, I do not myself know the answers fully to any of these questions, why should I not have told thee !" Ch. Upanishad V. 3-5. Then both the father and son went to the king and desired to be instructed as to the questions he had put. The king in agreeing to fulfil their desire made a very interesting remark. He said that this learning was never before known to the Brahmanas ; it has always been a monopoly of the Kshatriyas, and hence their superiority. "न प्राक् त्वतः पुरा विद्या ब्राह्मणान् गच्छति तस्मादु सर्वेषु लोकेषु चतस्यैव पश्यासनमभूदिति ।" Ch. Upanishad V. iii. 7. This is indeed a very remarkable statement ! Was it that while the Brahmins busied themselves with sacrifices and rituals and the gods connected with them, the Kshatriyas with their greater freedom from the bondage of tradition and ceremonialism, penetrated into the deeper mysteries of the universe ? It is a very remarkable feature of Indian religious development even in subsequent periods that most of the new departures originated outside the Brahminical circle. The greatest religious teachers and reformers of India were non-Brahmins—Rama, Krishna, Buddha, not to say anything about more modern reformers like Kabir, Nanak, Tukaram, were non-Brahmins. Here, at any rate, we have a definite statement that the deepest secrets of the Upanishads were at first unknown to the Brahmins. This is further confirmed by accounts of Brahmin teachers of eminence receiving instruction from Kshatriya princes. The

Chandogya Upanishad mentions another interesting story of five Brahmana teachers repairing to a king for instruction. "Prachinasala son of Upamanyu, Satyayajna son of Pulusha, Indradyumna son of Bhallava, Jana son of Sarkaraksha and Budila son of Aswataraswi, these five great sacrificers and scholars once met together and held a discussion as to who is the Self and what is Brahman. They thought of Uddalaka Aruni as the greatest religious teacher of the day and decided to go to him for answer to their query. But when they approached him Uddalaka said, 'Aswapati king of Kekaya is the greatest teacher living; so let us all go to him.' Ch. Upanishad V. xi. 1-4

It is evident, then, that in the age of the Upanishads there was an earnest pursuit of knowledge and a high level of culture. The course of study that was usually followed seemed to have been large and comprehensive. We have authentic information on the point from an interesting passage in the Chandogya Upanishad. In reply to the question of Sanatkumara as to what subjects he had already studied, Narada, a candidate for further instruction, says "I know the Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Sama Veda and the Atharva Veda, the fourth, the Itihasa-Purana, which is a fifth-book among the Vedas, the Science of ancestors, the Science of numbers, the Science of Devatas, the Science of treasure-findings, the undivided original Veda and its twenty-four branches, the superhuman Deva-sciences, the Science of Brahman, the Science of ghosts, the Science of politics, the Science of stars, the Science of serpents and Deva-officials, all these I know, O venerable Sir." Chandogya Upanishad VII. i. 2.

It was thus an age of profound religious and

metaphysical inquiry based upon deep and varied culture. Great students, learned men and women spent their lives in endeavour to solve the problems of deepest imports, and earnest inquirers went from place to place holding animated discussions eager to know the truth. The main topic of these discussions was 'What was the ultimate reality'. को नु आत्मा किं ब्रह्मेति ? "Who is the Self and what is Brahman ?" Ch. U. V. xi. 1.

केनेष्वितं पतति प्रेषितं मनः  
केन प्राणः प्रथमः प्रैति युक्तः  
केनेष्वितं वाचमिमां वदन्ति  
क्षमः शोदर्क व देवो युनक्ति । Kenopanishad I. 1.

"By whom impelled does the mind go to its object, by whom inspired does life move, by whom impelled is speech spoken, what god engages the eye and ear (to their respective works) ?"

It was an age of searching inquiry. The simple unquestioning child-like faith of the Rishis of the Rig Veda, who saw in each arresting phenomenon of nature a mighty benevolent god and sang in praise and prayer to him is left far behind. Neither the elaborate forms and formulas of the Brahmanas satisfied the eager spirit of the age. The more earnest minds of the time were not to be lulled or deterred by appeal to any authority however hallowed, but persistently asked for truth, the reality. The polytheistic or pluralistic conceptions of the universe was definitely overgrown, in the circles in which the Upanishads were formed. It was clearly recognised that there was but one Supreme God pervading the Universe. The question now was, 'who was this one God'. At first the answer was halting and tentative but gradually there

emerged the faith, that in fire and water, in earth and heaven, in the visible world outside, in the invisible world within, there is one unseen Reality, who is Spirit, the *Atman*, to know whom is the highest blessedness.

The distance from the Rig Veda may be measured by the development in the object of aspiration. In the hymns of the Rig Veda the staple objects of prayer and supplication are riches, cows, horses, gold, sons, and long-life. In the Upanishad there are still traces of this lower conception of the utility of religious work. But such lower ideas are rare. The desires of the devotees have learned to soar much higher. It is now recognised that the reward of good and religious actions here is the attainment of a higher world afterwards. And worshippers pray for uplift to a higher world. Then he offers oblations to the fire saying, "Salutation to fire dwelling on the earth, dwelling in all regions. Lead me, thy worshipper, to the world (appropriate for me) which is the world of the pious." But already the futility and transiency of the higher worlds has dawned on the minds of the sages, and they are not keen about the attainment of the higher regions. It is felt that the reward of merit is also short-lived ; at the expiry of the merit of good works one has to leave the worlds which he attained thereby. The law of Karma has been fully established ; the correspondence between cause and effect, between action good and bad, and its consequences are realised to be strict and inexorable, and therefore, transference to a higher or lower world, which is now considered the inevitable consequence, of higher or lower living here, is recognised to be a temporary character, and there is no finality

in it. The whole career of the individual is but a constant ceaseless whirling about from place to place, one condition to another. The exigencies of existence, good, bad, or indifferent are incidents of a past action. The well-known doctrine of transmigration has been firmly grasped in the Upanishad. A complicated itinerary of the soul from lower to higher forms of existence is elaborated in the fifth chapter of the Chhandogya Upanishad. But the sages of the Upanishads had found a way out of this vicious circle. This was the path of knowledge.

"Those who know the Brahman become free from the circle of birth and death. They have not to return again. "Those who proceed on that path do not return."

"स एनान् ब्रह्म गमयत्येष देवपश्चो ब्रह्मपथ एतेन प्रतिपद्यमाना इमं मानवमार्त्तं नावर्त्तन्ते नावर्त्तन्ते"। Ch. Upanishad IV. xv. 6.

Henceforth this cry of non-return became the inmost aspiration of the deeper soul and it was the synonym for salvation. The works of religious merit, sacrifices and ceremonies led from one form of existence to the other ; by knowing the Brahman alone one gets out of the circle of birth and death." "सर्वकामी सर्वकामः सर्वगन्धः सर्वरसः सर्वमिदमभ्यात्तोऽवाश्यनादर एषम आत्मान्तर्हृदय एतद् ब्रह्मैतमितः प्रेत्याभिसम्भवितास्मिति।" Ch. Upanishad III. xiv. 4.

"He whose are all works, all desires, all smells, all tastes, who pervades all the silent and impartial. He is my inmost self. He is the Brahman, when one departs from here (knowing this secret) he reaches him (the Brahman)" "वयोधर्म्म स्तुता यज्ञोऽध्ययनं दाशमिति प्रथमस्तप एव हितीयो ब्रह्मचार्यार्थकुलवासी द्वितीयोऽत्यन्तमानमाचार्यकुलेऽनसादयन् सर्व एते पुण्याद्योक्ता भवन्ति ब्रह्म संख्योऽप्यतस्मिति"। Ch. Upanishad II. xxiii. 1.

"There are three branches of Dharma ; sacrifice study and charity constitute one, austerity is another, and to dwell as a *Brahmacharin* in the house of ones preceptor, always mortifying the body while so dwelling, is the third. All these secure blessed worlds. But the one established in the Brahman alone obtain अमृतत्वं." This अमृतत्वं by which is perhaps meant the deliverence from the circle of death and life, became the goal of the devotee and throughout the Upanishads continued to be the object of his highest aspiration. Even in the Chandogya perhaps the earnest of the Upanishads we find the essence of the teachings of the Upanishads in their entirety. "The whole universe is" "Brahman" सर्वं खलिवदं ब्रह्म ; "the individual also is He" "तत्त्वमसि ख्वेति"। One who knows this obtains immortality. "ब्रह्मसंख्यो अमृतत्वमेति"।

This knowledge or *Brahmajnana* is considered to be a direct vision. The term used for it is, "seeing"—"पश्यति". And the contents of that vision, and the nature of the Brahman are detailed at length in the various Upanishads along with various subsidiary topics, such as the nature of the human soul, life after death, which will be best studied in connection with the separate Upanishads.

So we may now proceed to a closer examination of a few of the more important Upanishads.

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## CHAPTER X.

### THE CHANDOGYA UPANISHAD.

By virtue of its intrinsic merit its antiquity and its length, the Chandogya Upanishad, may fairly be placed at the head of the Upanishads. It is one of the two largest Upanishads, being almost equal in size with Brihadaranyaka. Though slightly smaller in volume than the Brihadaranyaka, both Badarayana, in his Brahmasutra and Sankara in his celebrated commentary of the Upanishads, have made the largest use of it, Sankara having made as many as 809 quotations from the Chandogya against 565 from the Brihadaranyaka. Chronologically, the Chandogya is probably the earliest of the Upanishads. The early origin of at least some sections of the Chandogya is evident from the fact that the ideas contained in them have a close similarity with the Brahmanas. Another significant fact indicating its early origin is that in several places (chapter I, Sec. 4, verse 3 ; ch. III, sec. 15, verse 7, ch. IV, sec. 17) while referring to the Vedas, only the three, namely Rig, Yajus and Sama are mentioned ; evidently when those sections are composed, the Atharva Veda had not yet been recognised as a canonical scripture.

The Chandogya Upanishad is a part of the Chandogya Brahmana of the Tandya branch of the Sama Veda. There are ten chapters in the Chandogya Brahmana of which the last eight constitute the Chandogya Upanishad and have no connection with the first two chapters, which consists of hymns in the ceremony of marriage and the rites necessary to be observed at

the birth of a child. The eight chapters forming the Upanishad are very much unequal in merits and are probably of different origin. The most important part of the book as it has come down to us are the last three chapters, wherein are to be found the boldest and most characteristic speculations of the Upanishadic age. The remaining five chapters, especially the first three, are of a very inferior quality, and contain much purile matter. The eight chapters, have very little connection with each other and stand almost apart. They might have been composed by different persons in different ages, and by some extraneous circumstances brought together. Even some of the individual chapters seem to be of composite nature.

An obvious indication of diversity of age and authorship in the composition of different chapters is to be found in the fact that while in the first, third and fourth chapters, only three of the Vedas are mentioned, in the seventh chapter, (Section I Verse 2) Narada, in reply to the question of Sanatkumar, as to the knowledge he has already acquired, mentions Atharva Veda as the fourth along with the other three (**आथर्वेणम् चतुर्थम्**). A little careful study, will reveal many such indications of the composite nature of the Upanishad ; but we cannot linger on this aspect of the book interesting though it may be. For our present purpose, it will be sufficient, to indicate the broad distinction and variety in the contents of the different chapters.

The first chapter deals with Udgitha, a subject which may be said to be unique and is hardly to be found not only in other Upanishads, but in the other chapters of the Chandogya Upanishad as well. The Udgitha is

spoken of as the highest and is enjoined to be worshipped as such. The very opening verse, inculcates the worship of *Om* as the *Udgitha*, and throughout the chapter the worship of *Udgitha* is reiterated with tiresome emphasis. Sometimes it is the Sun, (Ch. U. I. iii. 2), sometimes it is *Aditya* (Ch. U. I. iii. 1) sometimes it is the *Akasa* (Ch. U. I. ix. 2), sometimes it is the life in the nose (Ch. U. I. ii. 2.), sometimes it is the organ of speech (Ch. U. I. ii. 5), sometimes it is the eye (Ch. U. I. ii. 4), which is enjoined to be worshipped as *Udgitha*.

From this it would appear that *Udgitha* is the highest God, equivalent to the Brahman of later times. The knowledge or cult of *Udgitha* is called the *Udgitha Vidya*, as in the later Upanishads the knowledge of the highest is called *Brahma Vidya*. Elsewhere, *Udgitha* is spoken of as the juice or essence of the Sama Veda, which again is the juice or essence of the Rig Veda. If at any time or in any circle of teachers, the Highest was called and worshipped as *Udgitha*, as it would appear to have been the case from the first chapter of the Chandogya Upanishad, it soon became obsolete and the terms Atman and Brahman, took its place. The second chapter of the Chandogya glorifies the Sama Veda. "Whatever is good is Sama." Ch. U. II. i. 1.. The Sama is sometimes spoken of, as of five kinds, and sometimes as of seven kinds. The fanciful and purile nature of these topics will at once be seen from the following examples :— "लोकेषु पञ्चविंशति सामोपासीत द्वयिवौ हिकारोऽन्निः प्रसावोऽन्तरिक्षमुहोय आदित्यः प्रतिहारोद्यौर्जिधम-मिल्लूड्डेषु ।" Ch. U. II. ii. 1. The commentator Madhva tries to make out some meaning out of this jargon by interpreting it as follows :— 'Let one meditate on the

Harmonious (in His five-fold aspect) in the five worlds. Pradyumna in Prithivi (the earth), Vasudeva in Agni (fire), Narayana in the Sky, Aniruddha (the Evolver) in the *Aditya* (Sun), Sankarshana (the Destroyer) in *Dyaus* (heaven) so in an ascending line. Such purile and fanciful matters abound in the earlier chapters of the Chandogya. Yet they have been and may properly be, called as a genuine Upanishad in as much as throughout there is an evident search after the one and ultimate Reality underlying the universe.

The age in which the Chandogya Upanishad was composed was one of searching enquiry. The more earnest minds of the time were not to be lulled or deterred by any form, formula or authority however hallowed but persistently asked for the truth, the Reality. The polytheistic or pluralistic conception of the universe had been definitely overgrown at least in the circle in which the Upanishads grew up. It was clearly recognised that there was but one Supreme God, pervading the universe. The question now was who was this Supreme God. In the Chandogya Upanishad, we find various answers given to this fundamental question. The position of the supreme God was claimed on behalf of different Gods by different sages. Generally, one of the Vedic deities was declared to be the Supreme Being. In the eighth section of the first chapter we find an interesting discussion illustrating this point. There were persons versed in Vedic knowledge. Silaka Salavatya, Chaikitayana Dalbhya, and Pravahana Jaibali, once met and said to each other, "we are versed in the *Udgitha*; let us have a discussion on the subject." When all agreed Pravahana Jaibali said "You two speak first, for I wish to hear what you Brahmanas,

have to say." Then Silaka Salavatya said to Chaikitayana Dalbhya, "With your permission, I will ask you." "Ask" said Dalbhya. Then follows this dialogue :—“का सान्नो गतिरिति स्वर इति होवाच स्वरस्य का गतिरिति प्राण इति होवाच प्राणस्य का गतिरित्यनभिति होवाचान्नस्य का गतिरित्याप इति होवाच । अपां का गतिरित्यसौ लोक इति होवाचामुष्य लोकस्य का गतिरिति न स्वर्गं लोकमतिनयेदिति होवाच स्वर्गं वर्यं लोकाण् सामाभिसंखापयामः स्वर्गमत्स्वावर्ण हि सामेति । तथे ह शिलकः शालावत्यसैकितायनं दालभ्यमुवाचाप्रतिष्ठितं वै किल ते दालभ्य साम यस्त्वे तर्हि ब्रूयान् मूर्धा ते विष्पतिष्ठतोति मूर्धा ते विष्पतेदिति । हन्ताहमेतद्गवेत्तो वेदानोति विद्वौति होवाचामुष्य लोकस्य का गतिरित्ययं लोक इति होवाचास्य लोकस्य का गतिरिति न प्रतिष्ठां लोकमतिनयेदिति होवाच प्रतिष्ठां वर्यं लोकाण् सामाभिसंखापयामः प्रतिष्ठासंख्यावर्ण हि सामेति । तथे ह प्रवाहणो जैवलिक्ष्वाचान्तवद्वै किल ते शालावत्य साम यस्त्वेतर्हि ब्रूयान् मूर्धा ते विष्पतिष्ठतोति मूर्धा ते विष्पतेदिति हन्ताहमेतद्गवेत्तो वेदानोति विद्वौति होवाच । Ch. U. I. viii 4.8. अस्य लोकस्य का गतिरित्याकाश इति होवाच सर्वाणि ह वा इमानि भूतन्याकाशदेव समुत्पद्यन्त आकाशं प्रत्यस्तं यन्म्याकाशो ह्येवेभ्यो ज्यायानाकाशः परायणम् । स एष परोवरो-यानुहोष्टः स एषोऽनन्तः । Ch. U. I. ix. 1.

Madhva interprets these passages thus :—“In what does Agni merge in *Moksha*?” “In *Varuna*” he answered “In what does *Varuna* merge ?” “In *Surya*”. “In what does *Surya* merge ?” “In *Daksha*” he replied. “In what does *Daksha* merge in *Moksha* ?” He replied “*Rudra*” “In what does *Rudra* merge ?” He replied, “Let no man think that there is anything higher than *Rudra*, for we recognise that the Sama Veda expounds *Rudra* alone, because its hymns are songs in praise of *Rudra* alone. “Then Silaka Salavatya said to Chaikitayana Dalbhya, “O, Dalbhya, thy idea of the highest taught in Saman is imperfect and incomplete. And if

any one were to say, may your head fall off ; surely your head will fall off." Then Dalbhya said "Well then, let me learn this from your venerable self". "Learn it," said Sallavatya. "What is the goal of Rudra ?" "Brahma" he replied. "What is the goal of Brahma ?" asked Dalbhya. He replied, "Let no man think that there is anything higher than Brahma, for we recognise that the Sama-Veda expounds Brahma alone, because its hymns are Sama in praise of Brahma alone". Then said Pravahana Jaibali to Silaka Salavatya, "O Silaka Salavatya, your idea of the highest taught in the Saman is finite, and if any one were to say 'May your head fall off, surely your head will fall off.' " Then Salavatya said "Well then, let me know this from you." "Sir, know it" replied Jaibali. "Then Salavatya asked "what is the goal of Brahma ?" "The all-luminous *Akasha*," sky replied Pravahana, for all the mighty beings take their rise from the *Akasha* and have their setting in the *Akasha* ; the *Akasha* is greater than these, the a is their refuge. He indeed is higher than the high, He is the *Udgitha* is the infinite."

Similarly the five inquirers headed by Prachinasala who went to the king of Kekaya under the direction of Uddalaka Aruni, had each his own conception of the Highest. Aupamanyava on being asked whom he considered the Self said it was Divam. "उपमन्यव के त्वमाक्षाम्-सुपासस् इति:दिवमेव ।" Ch. V. xii. 1. Satyayajna Paushi said that the highest was *Aditya*. Indradyumna Ballava's highest was *Vayu*. Jana Sarkaraksha said that the highest was *Akasha*. Budila Asvatarashi said that the highest was *Apam* water, and according to Uddalaka Aruni the highest *Prithivi*, was the earth. But the king

was not satisfied with any of these answers, and made the following very interesting reply :—“तान् होवाचेते वै खण्डु  
यूयं पृथगिवेममात्मानं वैश्वानरं विद्यां सोऽवमयः यतस्त्वेभिर्व  
प्रादेशमात्रमभिविमानमात्मानं वैश्वानरसुपास्ते स सर्वेषु लोकेषु सर्वेषु  
भूतेषु सर्वेषामस्त्रमस्ति । तस्य ह वा एतस्यात्मनो वैश्वानरस्य  
मूर्खेव सूतेजाप्तुर्विश्वरूपः प्राणः पृथग्वर्मात्मा सन्देहो बहुलो  
वस्तिरेव रयिः पृथिव्येव पादाबुर एव वैदि लोमानि वर्हिश्वदयं  
गार्हपत्यो मनोऽन्वाहार्यपचन आस्थमाह वनीयः ।” Ch. U. V. 18.

“Then Aswapati said to them, “you verily eat your food knowing the Atman as separate ; but he who worships the Atman Vaiswanara as of the Saka of the heart and at the same time limitless, he eats food in all world in all beings and in all selves. Verily of that Atman Vaiswanara the head is the good energy, the eye is the all-seing, the breath is the all-moving, the trunk is the space containing all, bladder is the *Rayi*, feet the earth, the chest the altar, the hairs the grass, the heart the *Garhapatya* fire, the mind the *Anvaharya* fire and mouth the *Ahavaniya* fire.”

In the beginning of the third chapter Aditya is spoken of as the highest God. “असौवा आदित्यो देवरमधु” “The whole universe is sustained by him”. Again in the nineteenth section of the third chapter the same position is given to Aditya “आदित्योब्रह्मत्वादेगः” “Aditya is Brahma.” More frequently Vayu is assigned the highest place in the Chandogya Upanishad. “वायुवावि संवर्गो यदा वा अभ्युरुद्धायति  
वायुमेवाप्येति यदा सूर्योऽस्मिति वायुमेवाप्येति यदाचन्द्रोऽस्मिति  
वायुमेवाप्येति ।” IV. iii. 1. “Vayu is indeed the great container. When Agni gives out he verily goes into Vayu ; When the sun sets he verily goes into Vayu, when the moon sets he verily goes into Vayu.”

Elsewhere Agni is spoken of as the supreme being

dwelling in all. Thus we find that in the Chandogya Upanishad the conception of one supreme being pervading and overruling the whole universe has been fully realised. It would seem that for some time there was an attempt to invest one of the Vedic deities with this supreme distinction. But somehow it did not succeed, and the Upanishads gave a name of their own to the Supreme Being, whom they realised in the universe. In the opening verses of the Chandogya he is called the Udgitha as we have seen. In some places he is spoken of as Sama. But soon these appellations were given up and the well-known epithets of Brahman and Atman were adopted, which remained as the current name for the Supreme Being throughout the age of the Upanishads. But the most important of the sages, mentioned in the Chandogya Upanishad are Uddalaka Aruni and his son Swetaketu. We shall hear more of them by and by; but even they seem to be inferior to Pravahana Jaibali who was a Kshatriya. Another royal teacher mentioned in the Chandogya Upanishad is Aswapati, king of Kekaya. It would appear that the profoundest teachings of the Upanishads originated with the Kshatriyas, and Brahmin teachers like Swetaketu and Uddalaka Aruni had to go to them for learning them.

In the midst of inferior and purile matters of which I have given some illustration, a profound teaching in the genuine spirit of the Upanishads has suddenly sprung in the middle of the third chapter. “सर्वं खलिवदं ब्रह्म। तत्पूर्वानिति शान्त उपासौत।” Ch. U. III. xiv. 1. “All this indeed is Brahman, all things have been born from Him, exist in Him and returns unto Him. Worship Him with equanimity of mind”. Here the Chandogya

Upanishad has enunciated a proposition which may be called the very central teaching of the Upanishad, and which the later Upanishads have re-echoed, but perhaps not with the same emphasis and effectiveness. It is further elaborated in the subsequent verses, as follows :—“He is of the nature of the spirit. Life is His body. Light is His colour, truth is His desire. He is all-pervading like the sky ; all actions, all desires, all scents, all juices are His. He pervades everything but is without senses or speech. He is the Soul of my soul. He is within my heart. He is smaller than grains ; on the other hand, He is greater than the earth, greater than the heavens, greater than all the worlds.” मनोमयः प्राणश्चरौरो भारूप सत्यमङ्गलं आकाशात्मा सर्वकर्मी सर्वकामः सर्वगम्भः सर्वरसः सर्वमिदमभ्यत्तोह वाष्पनादरः। एष स आत्मान्तर्दद्येऽत्यौदान् व्रीहीर्वा यथादा सर्वपादाश्चामाकादा श्यामाकतण्डुलादा एष सप्तात्मा अत्तर्दद्ये ज्यायान् पृथिव्या ज्यायामन्तरिक्षाज्ञायान्विषो ज्यायानेभ्यो लोकेभ्यः। Ch. U. III. xiv. 2-3. Here the Chandogya has reached a height of speculation which may be said not to have been surpassed, not only by any of the Upanishads but also not even anywhere in the religious literature of the world. This teaching has been associated with the name of Shandilya who however, is not mentioned again. But this height is not maintained uniformly. In the rest of the third and fourth chapter there is again a climbing down into much inferior and ephemeral matters. In the fourth chapter, however, there is a story of Satyakama Jaibala referred to elsewhere, indicating a bold disregard of the tradition and freedom from caste prejudices.

The fifth chapter opens with an interesting and beautiful parable of a dispute between the senses and life

establishing supremacy of life. Then it passes on to the story of Swetaketu, a brahmin youth whatant to the court of king Prabhavana Jaibali of Panohala. The names of the three persons Uddalaka, Aruni, his son Swetaketu and king Prabhavana Jaibali figure largely in the Chhandogya Upanishad. Swetaketu had finished his education according to the custom of age, and was rather puffed up with pride. The king asked him five questions, to none of which he could reply. Humiliated at his disconfiture Swetaketu returned to his father and said to him in chagrin 'that kinsman of the Kshatriyas aked me five question to which I could not reply.' Uddalaka Aruni said that he himself did not know the answers to those questions. Then Uddalaka Aruni went to the king and begged him to teach him. The king after much reluctance consented to communicate to him the secret knowledge which was so far unknown to the Brahmin.

The five questions which Pravahana Jaibali had asked Swetaketu and which led to this interesting discourse were as follows:—"Where do creatures go up (after death) ? How do creatures return (to this world) ? Where do the path of the Gods, and the path of the fathers separate from each other ? Why is not the world (of the fathers) filled with creatures ? Why has water been called Person in the fifth offering ?" The knowledge imparted by Pravahana Jaibali to Uddalaka Aruni does not quite follow the order of the questions nor cover them entirely. It opens with the description of five figurative sacrifices in which the heavens, the clouds, the earth, person and air are Fires, and has been called the knowledge and cult of Five Fires. The only important part of the king

Pravahana's teaching is that relating to the life after death. According to him those who know the cult of five fires and meditate in the forests with reverence, attain Brahman by certain stages. This has been called the path of the gods. Those who perform works of public beneficence and give alms in villages, go after death to smoke, from smoke to night, from night to dark fort-night, from dark-fortnight to six months of the southern course of the sun, from those months to the world of the *Pitrīs*, from the world of the *Pitrīs* to the sky, and from sky to the moon. They reside in the moon until the fruits of their actions are exhausted; after that they return by the same path, from moon to sky, from sky to air, from air to smoke from smoke to cloud; then they come down as rain and are born as barley and other grains, vegetables and large trees and such creatures as eat these grains. Those thus born who in previous life did good works obtain good birth in the womb of Brahmin Kshatriya and Vaisya, and those who did evil works obtain evil birth as dogs, pigs, and Chandalas. Here we find the doctrine of transmigration in full swing.

In the eleventh section of the fifth chapter, we find another story of six Brahmins going to a Kshatriya king, Aswapati of Kekaya, in search of the secret knowledge. The story has been narrated at some length else-where and need not be repeated here. Now we come to the most important teaching of the Chandogya upanishad which is given in a form of dialogue between Uddalaka Aruni and his son Swetaketu and covers the whole of sixth chapter. We have already met these two important personages. But the account of them given here is

somewhat different. Uddalaka Aruni was known to be a great teacher, but in both the two previous stories Uddalaka Aruni has been described as ignorant of the highest knowledge, and has been represented to go to Pravahana Jaibali and king Aswapti for instruction. But in the sixth chapter he is represented as communicating the deepest knowledge to his son Swetaketu. When Swetaketu, having completed the usual course of twelve years under some reputed teacher of the time, returned to his father at the age of twenty four, the latter asked him if he had acquired the one knowledge which when known, and by which all unheard things are heard, and all unknown thing are known. Swetaketu asked, "What is that knowledge ?" Uddalaka Arnni said, "Just as if a lump of earth is known, all earthen things which are made of it are known, just as a lump of gold is known, all things made of gold are known, similarly if that one knowledge is known all unheard things are heard, all unknown things are known." .. Swetaketu confessed his ignorance of this One Supreme knowledge and begged his gather to teach him about it. In response to that query Uddalaka Aruni propounds a theory of unity of all existence and illustrates it by many examples. The sum and substance of Uddalaka's teaching is that all existence springs from and established in an Unseen Reality. "स य एषोऽणिसैतदात्मगमिदं सर्वं तत् सत्यं" "Just as a lump of salt when diluted into water can not be seen or distinguished but pervedes the whole of the water, so, that Unseen Reality pervedes the entire universe. Jnst as in a seed the future tree with trunks, branches, leaves, flowers and fruits exist, so in that Unseen Reality the entire universe exists" This central

teaching is emphasised with many similar illustrations. By a still bolder sweep of imagination, this unseen reality is identified with the human soul “तत्त्वमसि खेत्रोक्तो” Ch. VI. viii. 7 “Thou art That O, Swetaketu”. For boldness of speculation and grandeur of expression this section of the Chandogya is unique. The conversation between father and son is marvellous alike in depth of thought and dramatic expression. The deepest curiosity of the son has been roused by the astonishing revelation of the father, and Swetaketu prays to be enlightened more and more on the subject, and the father in an unfaltering voice goes on declaring, ‘Thou art that. The individual is the eternal reality but so long as he is united with the body, he does not know it. But a man who has received the true knowledge from an enlightened teacher, has to wait only so long as he has not been released from the body; after that he attains the Reality.’

The seventh chapter is similarly a discourse between Narada and Sanatkumara. Narada, an inquirer, goes to the sage Sanatkumara and begs to be taught by him. Sanatkumara questions him as to his past acquirements and on being told that he has read the four Vedas, and all the sciences taught in the school, declares that they are but names. After some preliminary conversations of an inferior quality Sanatkumara declares a great truth in a beautiful language. “यो वै सूप्ता तत्सुखं नात्पे सुखमस्ति ।” Ch. U. VII. xxiii. 1. “That which is infinite is bliss, there is no bliss in that which is finite.” In the subsequent section Sanatkumara proceeds to dilate on the nature of the infinite. “यत्र नान्यत् पश्यति नान्यच्छृणुति नान्यह विजाताति स भूमाऽथ यदान्यत् पश्यत्यन्यच्छृणुत्यव्याहिजाताति

तदस्य या भूमा तदस्यतमय यदस्य तन्मर्त्यं स भगवः कस्मिन् प्रतिष्ठित इति स्वे महिन्द्रि यदि वा न महिन्द्रीति ।” Ch. U. VII. xxiv. 1. “Where nothing else is seen, nothing else is heard, nothing else is known that is Infinite. And that where something else is seen, something else is heard, something else is known that is finite. That which is Infinite is immortal, but that which is finite is subject to death. In what then, Oh Master, is the Infinite established? He is established in His own glory perhaps even not in His glory.” “स एवाधस्तात् स उपरिष्टात् स पश्चात् स पुरस्तात् स दक्षिणतः स उत्तरतः स एवेदं सर्वमिति ।” Ch. U. VII. xxx. 1. “He is below, He is above, He is behind, He is before. He is on the right, He is on the left. He is all this.” This infinite is identified with the self. So it is said “I am below. I am above, I am behind, I am before, I am on the right side, I am on left, I am all.” “अहम् एव अधस्तात्, अहम् उपरिष्टात्, अहम् पश्चात्, अहम् पुरस्तात्, अहम् दक्षिणतः, अहम् उत्तरतः अहम् एव सर्वम् ।” Ch. U. VII. xxv. 1. “One who sees and knows thus, becomes, Self, delights in the Self, revels in the Self, is united with the Self, and becomes the king of the self. He wonders at his will in all the worlds.” Ch. U. VII. xxv. 2. Here the teaching of Sanatkumara coincides with that of Uddalaka Aruni; one calls the fundamental Reality as the भूमा Infinite, the other calls it the अणिमा the smallest or the unseen. It is doubtful whether the chapters sixth and seventh of the Chandogya had the same or different origin.

The eighth chapter specifies the distinction between the body and Soul or Self. In the opening section it is said that within the body there is a room of the shape of lotus; and within that room there is a small space.

That which dwells in this space is the self or soul. When the body is destroyed or diseased, the soul is not destroyed or diseased. The soul is without sin, without decay, without death, without grief, without hunger. "That which rising from this body shines effulgent in its own essence, that is, the Soul is without death, without fear ; He is the Brahman. The name of that Brahman is Truth." : "अथ य एष संप्रसादोऽस्माच्छरोगात् समुख्याय परं ज्योतिरुपसम्पद्य स्वेन रूपेणाभिष्यर्थं एष आवेति होवाचैतद्ब्रह्मतम-भयमेतद् ब्रह्मेति तस्य ह वा एतस्य ब्रह्मणो नाम सत्यमिति ।"

Ch. U. VIII. iii. 8.

At death the soul goes up leaving behind the body. The distinction between body and soul is further emphasised by a story or parable, called the parable of Prajapati, Indra and Virochana in the last half of the chapter. The Devas and Asuras, having heard from Prajapati that the Soul without sin, without old age, without death, without grief, without hunger without thirst, were anxious to know the Soul. The Devas deputed Indra and Asuras Virochana to Prajapati to obtain the knowledge of the Soul. Both Indra and Virochana went to Prajapati and begged to be taught about the soul. What Prajapati at first taught was in effect that the body was the soul. Virochana became satisfied with this and returned to the Asuras. Indra, however, was not satisfied and while returning saw the defect of this knowledge and again went to Prajapati, and told him of the inadequateness of the knowledge imparted by him. Prajapati admitted it and asked Indra to stay with him another 32 years, at the end of which period Prajapati told him that the person who appears in the dream is the soul. Indra was still dissatisfied with the

answer, and after repeated tentative answers, Prajapati at last communicated to him the true knowledge as follows :—“मघवन् मर्त्यं इदं शरोरमात्तं सूख्युना तदत्या चृनसौ शरोरसामानोऽधिष्ठानमात्ती वै सशरोरः प्रियाप्रियाभ्यां न वै सशरोरस्य सतः प्रियप्रियरूपं इतिस्वशरोरं वाव सन्तं न प्रियाप्रिये स्पृशतः ।” Ch. U. VIII. xii. 1. “Oh, Maghavan this body is mortal, and subject to death, but it is the abode of this immortal bodiless Soul. This body is subject to pleasure and pain; but the bodiless Soul is not subject to pleasure and pain. Just as air, lightning and thunder are bodiless but rise from the sky, so the Soul which is bodiless rises from the body.” “Just as a horse is yoked to a chariot so the soul is yoked to the body.” यथा प्रायोग्यं आचरणे युक्तं एवायमस्मिन् शरोरे प्रोणो युक्तः । Ch. U. VIII. xii. 3. ‘He, who dwelling in the body understands that, is the Soul, the eyes are only the medium or instrument of seeing. He dwelling in the body knows that, he who speaks is the soul. The speech is only the organ of speaking”, Ch. U. VIII. xii. 4—5 and so on. As the horse shakes off the hair so the soul shakes off sin. As the moon comes out of the mouth of Rahu, the soul is liberated from the body and goes to the world of Brahman having attained his goal.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### THE BRIHADARANYAKOPANISHAD

Next to the Chandogya the longest Upanishad is the Brihadaranyaka. Chronologically, the Brihadaranyaka seems to be contemporaneous with the Chandogya the latter possibly being prior by a short time. Some of the Rishis mentioned in the Chandogya reappear in the Brihadaranyaka. The most prominent teacher of the Chandogya Upanishad Uddalaka 'Aruni with his son Swetaketu has been described exactly in the same outline in the Brihadaranyakopanishad. Similarly the Kahatriya king Pravahana Jaibali of Panchala is mentioned in the same connection as in the Chandogya. There can be no doubt that these are identical persons, and both the Upanishads deal with contemporaneous teachers or with persons whose memory is yet fresh. Another Rishi of the Chandogya who is referred to in the Brihadaranyakopanishad is Ushasti Chakrayana. On the other hand there is no mention in the Chandogya of the most important Rishi of the Brihadaranyakopanishad, *Yajnavalkya*, which would indicate that Yajnavalkya had not yet been born or attained fame at the time when Chandogyopanishad was composed. A considerable portion of the subject matter of the Chandogya re-appears in the Brihadaranyakopanishad and though the language is somewhat varied, the ideas are exactly identical. Thus the story of the Asuras foiling the attempt of the Devas, both the descendants of Prajapati, to overcome the former, is found in the Brihadaranyakopanishad I-III. Similarly the story of the senses contending for the place of supremacy is given

almost identically, word for word, in the Chhandogya V. i. 7., and Brihadaranyaka vi. i. 6. Again the classical story of Swetaketu repairing to the court of the king of Panchala and being nonplussed by that learned Kshatriya and finally receiving instruction from him along with his father (Ch. U. v. 3.) is identical in every detail with the story as given in the Brihadaranyakopanishad (vi. 2.), though the language is somewhat varied. It is evident that these are different versions of the same tradition. The Chandogya and Brihadaranyaka must have been completed at different localities at no distant date from each other. I am inclined to think that the Brihadaranyaka is a little later, for in the Brihadaranyaka the central ideas of the Upanishad have taken a more definite and systematic shape. The unity and all-pervasiveness of the Supreme Reality is declared with stronger emphasis. There is less of the tendency to identify the supreme reality with any of the Vedic deities. Though in the Brihadaranyaka, as in the Chhandogya, Vayu or Aditya is occasionally called the supreme reality, that position is confined in a larger measure to Brahman and Atman. In the Brihadaranyakopanishad the supreme reality is oftenest designated as Atman. “आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्य अत्थो मत्तथो निदिध्यासितश्चः” । Brihadaranyakopanishad II. iv. 5. “The Atman is to be seen and heard, meditated upon and comprehended.” “तदेतत् प्रेयः पृत्रात् प्रेयः वित्तात् प्रेयोन्यक्षात् मर्वेच्छादस्तरतयं यद्यमात्मा” । Brihadaranyakopanishad I. iv. 8. “That inmost Atman is dearer than son, dearer than riches, dearer than everything else.” “यद्यायमात्मा तिजोभयोऽस्तमयः पुरुषोऽयमेव च योऽयमात्मेदमसृतमिदं ब्रह्मोदं सर्वं” । Brihadaranyakopanishad II. v. 14. “This Atman

which is the luminous and deathless being, this Atman is deathless ; it is all." The creation of the universe is also attributed to the Atman "आत्मेदमपासौत् पुरुषविदिः". Brihadaranyakopanishad I. iv. 1. "In the beginning this was Self alone in the shape of a person (Purusha)." The account of the creation of the varied universe follows the ordinary tradition and is not of any importance. The only point to be noted is that it is called the Atman and not the Sat or Asat of the Chandogya. But the Brihadaranyaka also like the Chandogya is not consistent on the point. Elsewhere Death is declared to be the original existence. "नैवेह किञ्चनाय आसौत् स्वत्युनैवेदमाहृतमासौत्" Brihadaranyakopanishad I. ii. 1. "In the beginning there was nothing (to be perceived) here whatsoever. By death indeed all this was concealed." The contents of the concept Atman or Brahman have been fully developed in the Brihadaranyaka. "He is called the Ind-welling in all". "य आत्मा सर्वान्तरः Brihadaranyakopanishad III. iv. 1. "यः पृथिव्या तिष्ठन् पृथिव्या चक्षते यं पृथिवी न वेद यस्य पृथिवी शरीरः यः पृथिवीमन्तरो यमयत्येष त आत्मान्तर्यम्यमृतः । योऽप्नु तिष्ठन्नरोऽन्तरो यमयत्येषत आत्मान्तर्यम्यमृतः ।" Brihadaranyakopanishad III. vii. 4-5. "He, who dwelling in earth, is the inmost soul of earth, whom earth does not know, whose body is this earth, who is above earth and controls it ; that Atman is the controller from within and deathless. He who dwelling in water is the inmost soul of water, whom water does not know, whose body is water, who is alone water and controls it ; that Soul is the controller from within and deathless." He who dwells in the sky, in air, in the heavens, in the sun, he is

declared to be dwelling in everything. “यः सर्वेषु भूतेष तिष्ठन् सर्वेभ्यो भूतेभ्योमतारो यं सर्वाणि भूतानि न विद्यते सर्वाणि शरीरं यः सर्वाणि भूतम्यन्तारो यमयत्येष त आत्मान्तर्याम्यन्त इति ।” Brihadaranyakopanishad III. vii. 15. “He who dwells in all beings, and within all beings, whom all beings do not know, whose body all beings are, and who pulls (rules) all beings within, he is thy Self, the puller (ruler) within, the immortal.” He cannot be seen but he sees all. “न दृष्टेद्दृष्टारं पश्येन्द्रं श्रुते श्रोतारण्डं शृणुयात् मतेर्महारं मन्मौद्या न विज्ञातेर्विज्ञातारं विजानीया एष त आत्मा सर्वान्तरः ।” Brihadaranyakopanishad III. iv. 2. “Thou couldst not see the (true) seer of sight, thou couldst not hear the (true) hearer of hearing, nor perceive the perceiver of perception, nor know the knower of knowledge. This is thy self, who is within all.” That the whole Universe is rooted and grounded in the one Supreme Reality is declared with an emphasis which indicates absolute conviction. In the contest of Jajnavalkya, with the assembled sages in the court of Janaka, Gargi comes forward with two questions and declares : if Jajnavalkya can answer these two questions satisfactorily she will admit his claim to the highest knowledge. Her first question is this “सा हीवाच यद्वृद्धं याज्ञवल्क्य दिवो यदवाकं पृथिव्या यदन्तरा द्यावापृथिवी इमे यज्ञून्तं भवत्त्वं भविष्यत्वं लाचक्षते कर्मस्तदीतं च प्रोतं चेति ।” Brihadaranyakopanishad III. viii. 3. “She said, ‘O Yajnavalkya, that of which they say that it is above the heavens, beneath the earth, embracing heaven and earth, past, present and future, tell me in what is it woven, like warp and woof ?’” Jajnavalkya replied, “It is Akasa.” Then Gargi questioned further “in what is the Akasa rooted.” Jajnavalkya’s reply to this further question is the memorable declaration

of the nature of the Brahman, noble alike in language and in conception. He is here called the अक्षर the Imperishable, who rules and guides the Universe. “एतस्य वा अक्षरस्य प्रशासने गार्गि सूर्योचन्द्रमसौ विघ्नतौ तिष्ठतः । एतस्य अक्षरस्य प्रशासने गार्गि द्यावापूर्थिश्चौ विघ्नतौ तिष्ठतः ॥ एतस्य वा अक्षरस्य प्रशासने गार्गि निमेषा मुहूर्ता अहो-रात्रारण्धमासा मामा कर्तवः संवत्सरा इति विघ्नतास्तिष्ठन्ति । एतस्य वा अक्षरस्य प्रशासने गार्गि प्राच्योऽन्या नद्यः स्वान्दते खेतेभ्यः पर्वतेभ्यः प्रतीच्योऽन्याः ॥” Brihadaranyakopanishad III. viii. 9. “By the command of that Akshara (the imperishable) O ! Gargi, Sun and Moon stand apart. By the command of that Akshara, O ! Gargi, heaven and earth stand apart. By the command of that Akshara, O ! Gargi, what are called moments (Nimesha) hours (Muhurtha), days and nights, half months, months, seasons, years, all stand apart. By the command of that Akshara, O ! Gargi, some rivers flow to the East from the white mountains, others to the west, or to any other quarter.”

The relation of the Atman with the world is indicated in the Brihadaranyakopanishad by two similes. “स यथोर्णनाभिस्तन्तुनोष्टरेयथान्नः छुट्रा विस्फुलिङ्गा व्युष्टरन्त्येवमेवासादामनः सर्वे प्राणाः सर्वे लोका सर्वे इवाः सर्वाणि भूतानि व्युष्टरन्ति” Brihadaranyakopanishad II. i. 20. “As the spider comes out with its thread, or as small sparks come forth from fire, thus do all senses, all worlds, all Devas, all beings come forth from that Self.”

The overruling providence of the Atman is declared in a series of beautiful and inspiring passages in the memorable dialogue between Yajnavalkya and Gargi.

In the Brihadaranyaka we also come across the deeply philosophical conception of the Absolute. The writer of the Brihadaranyaka has already arrived at the interesting

dictum of the later philosophy of the East and West that every assertion is a limitation, and that we cannot say thing about the Infinite. The Brihadaranyaka posits again and again that the Atman is to be defined by 'नेति नेति' "He is not this, He is not that" Brihadaranyakopanishad II. iii. 6 ; III. ix. 16. "स होवाचैतहै तदद्वरं गार्गि ब्राह्मणा अभिवदन्त्यस्तुलमनगवङ्गस्तमदीर्घमलोहितमस्ते हम-क्षायमतमोऽवाद्यवनाकाशमसङ्ख्यरसमग्न्यमचक्षुष्कामश्चौत्रमवागमनो-उत्तेजस्तमप्राणममखमात्रमनन्तरबाह्य" Brihadaranyakopanishad. III. viii. 8 "He said, O ! Gargi, the Brahmans call this, the *Ik-hara* (the imperishable). It is neither coarse nor fine, neither short nor long, neither red (like fire) nor fluid (like water); it is without shadow without darkness, without air, without ether, without attachment, without taste, without smell, without eyes, without ears, without speech, without mind, without light (vigour), without breath, without a mouth (door) without measure having no within and no without." He said "That eternal, O Gargi is spoken of by the Brahmans as neither large nor small neither short nor long."

Thus we find that the Brihadaranyak has developed the concept of the Infinite God to its logical conclusion of the Absolute.

On the side of unity of Godhead it reaches a rigorous monism. The Brahman is all in all. "स होवाच न वा अरे पत्स्यः कामाय पतिः प्रियो भवत्यात्मस्तु कामाय पतिः प्रियो भवति न वा अरे जायाये कामाय जाया प्रिया भवत्यात्मस्तु कामाय जाया प्रिया भवति।" Brihadaranyakopanishad II. iv. 5. "He said : husband is not dear for the sake of the husband, husband is dear for the sake of the Atman, wife is not dear for the sake of the wives, wife is dear for the sake of the Atman" and so on concluding with the highly interesting declara-

tion “सर्वं ब्रह्म वेदेदं ज्ञावमिमि लोका इमे देवा इमानि भूतानीदप्य सर्वं यद्यथमात्मा ।” Brihadaranyakopanishad. II. iv. 6. “Know all this as Brahman ; this Kshatriya, these worlds, these gods these creatures, whatever exists is Atman.” Here we have the same thought as in the सर्वं खलिष्वदं ब्रह्म of the शान्तिग्रन्थ, only further amplified and perhaps losing some of its beauty and intensity in the process. Developing further this conception of the unity of existence, the Brihadaranyak declares the impossibility of all knowledge ; for knowledge presupposes a subject and object “यत्र हि हैतमिव भवति तदितरं जिज्ञाति तदितरं इतरं पश्यति तदितरं इतरं शृणोति तदितरं इतरमभिवदति तद् इतरप्यइतरं मनुते तदितरं इतरं विजानाति यत्र वा अस्य सर्वमात्रेवाभूतत्वेन जिज्ञेत्तत्केन कं पश्येत्तत्केन कर्तुं शृण्यात्तत्केन कमभिवदेत्तत् केन कं कं मन्वोत तत् केन कं विजानोयाद्यनेदप्य सर्वं विजानातिलं केन विजानीयाद्विज्ञातारमरे केन विजानीयादिति ।” Brihadaranyakopanishad. II. iv. 14. “When there is as it were duality, then one sees the other, one smells the other, one hears the other, one salutes the other, one perceives the other, one knows the other, but when the Self only is all this, how should he smell another, how should he see another, how should he hear another, how should he perceive another, how should he know another. How should he know Him by whom he knows all this. How O beloved, should he know (himself) the knower ?” It is the more explicit statement of the idea contained in शान्तिग्रन्थ VI. 24. 1. “यत्र नान्यत् पश्यति नान्यत् शृणोति नान्यत् विजानाति स भूमा” “Where nothing else is seen, nothing else is heard, nothing else is known that is Infinite.”

The Brihadaranyaka however does not take up so seriously the profoundly interesting conception of the

Chandogya of the unity of the Atman and Paramatman. Once or twice the idea recurs in the Brihadaranya-kopanishad as well, II. iv. 10, "य एवं वेदाहं ब्रह्मस्तीति स इदं सर्वं भवति," "One who knows, 'I am Brahman,' he becomes all" but we do not find here the earnest and enthusiastic realisation of this idea, as in the तत्त्वमसि खेतकेतो of the Chhandogya.

In the Brihadaranyaaka the doctrine of Karma has been realised with firmer grip. It is said that every action, good or bad leaves its indelible mark on character ; in fact it is the action which makes the man. "यथाकारौ यथाचारौ तथा भवति साधुकारौ साधु भवति पापकारौ पापो भवति पुण्यः पुण्येन कर्मणा भवति पापः पापेन।" IV. iv. 5, "A man becomes such as his action and as his conduct. One who acts righteously becomes righteous, and one who acts wickedly becomes wicked ; a man becomes holy by holy actions a man becomes sinner by sinful actions."

There is further a very curious passage in the Brihadaranyaaka which anticipates a much later development of the theory of *Karma*. In the course of the metaphysical discussion of Jajnavalkya and the assembled sages in the court of Janaka, Jaratkarava Artabhaga says : when a man dies his speech enters into fire, his breath enters into air, his eyes into the sun, mind into the moon, etc. What then becomes of the man ? "याज्ञवल्क्येति होवाच यदास्य पुरुषस्य मृतस्यान्मिं वागप्येति वातं प्राणचक्षुरादिलं मनस्यन्दृदिग्यः श्रोत्रं पृथिव्यैरु शरीरमाकाशमालौषधीर्लोमानि वनस्पतीन् केशा अस्तु लोहितं च रेतस्य निघीयते कायं तदा पुरुषो भवतीत्याहर सोम्य।" III. ii. 13. Jajnavalkya catches the hand of Artabhaga and says, "let us discuss the question by ourselves ; it should not be discussed in public" ; so they two went out and discussed apart. We are not given \*

a full report of their discussion, but it is said in brief that what they spoke of was *Karma*; they magnified Karma. “तौ ह यदूचतुः कर्म हैव तदूचतुरथ यत् प्रशंसतुः कर्म है व तत् प्रशंसतुः।” III. ii. 13. “What they said was *Karma* (work), what they praised was Karman.” Is it then that already Jajnavalkya had arrived at the position which Buddhism several centuries later so boldly promulgated that there is no self or soul apart from the action? By the entire line of discussion, its secrecy and its mysteriousness it would seem as if Jajnavalkya had arrived at this position but he did not think it wise to give it to the public.

• Thus we find that the boldest speculations of the Upanishads have been fully developed in the Brihadaranyakopanishad. In loftiness of thought, and beauty of expression it has hardly been surpassed in the whole range of religious literature either before or after.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE ISOPANISHAD.

In the literature known as the Upanishads, there is a booklet which is called the Isa or Isavasya Upanishad after the first word of the first verse. Though it is a piece of only eighteen verses, it has been held in high regard by all commentators. It is a part of the Yajurveda Samhita, being the Mantra portion of the Fortieth Chapter of the white Yajur Veda. Short as it is, it is very obscure and often enigmatical, and it is of doubtful homogeneity. The last few verses refer to the Vedic Gods Purshan, Yama, Surya, Agni and are undoubtedly allied to the Vedic Mantras. But the earlier Mantras deal with the ordinary Upanishadic subjects. The eighteen verses seem to have very little internal connection among themselves.

The opening verse breathes out the truly Upanishadic idea that the entire universe is to be clothed or covered by God. It is to be noticed however that instead of the ordinary Upanishadic name Brahman or Atman, the word Isa, which is of later origin, has been used. The second half of the verse inculcates "the moral precepts, *not to covet one's wealth, but to enjoy what is given by God*. The second verse however enjoins that one should desire to live a hundred years doing his works here. It is rather curious why should such an advice be given ? It would seem already an aversion to work and life-weariness had set in among the Aryans to whom life had been so sweet and work so attractive. The con-

ception that the work was a ~~letter~~ bondage must have had already taken a deep root in the minds of the people ; so it is pointed out there is no other way of living, and when done in this spirit the fruits of action do not cling to a person. The desire not to live long and perhaps even to put an end to life must have become very common. It is therefore enjoined that one should desire to live hundred years.

The next verse is still more surprising. Literally it means that those who kill themselves "*Atmahanā*", enter the demonic world which is covered by dense darkness. Sankara and other commentators, however, take it metaphorically, rendering the word *Atmahanā*, as those who are engaged in *kamya karma* or 'works of desire' and thus are slayers of Atma." This, to say the least, is far-fetched and there is no reference to context. The literal meaning fits in with the context exactly. It would seem that life-weariness referred to in the previous verse had become so dangerous that the people used to put an end to their lives. So the sage says that those who put to such a violent end to their lives have to go to the demonic worlds. It is well-known that at the close of the Vedic Age there was a strong aversion to life ; a spirit of profound pessimism had spread over leading to renunciation of society and possibly life. The verses under comment refer to these circumstances. The Isopanishad enjoins that one has no right to put a violent end to his own life, but should desire to live a hundred years, the normal term of life, doing his work and enjoying the fruits of his labour, without coveting others' wealth or properties. Thus we have a clear and consistent sense from the three verses of the text. \*

The next three verses seem to have no connection with the first three verses. They indicate the divine nature of the Supreme Spirit which pervades everywhere, swifter than mind, near as well as far off, is within all as also outside all.

The next two verses are as beautiful as they are sublime and would alone make the treatise immortal. They are the very crown of the Upanishadic literature, whoever sees all things in God, and God in all things does not hate anyone or keep himself separate from anyone. The predicate *Vijugupsate* (विजुगुप्सते) literally means *Gup* 'to protect' or to be separated from anyone. The Hindu precept of looking upon everything as one's self is indeed very high. Why are we to do good to others or consider the greatest good of the greatest number as the highest morality ? It becomes easily explicable by the Hindu conception that the same self is in everything. The fountain head of this conception is found in the verse of the Isopanishad. From here, it has pervaded the higher Hindu thought.

The seventh verse strikes a still higher note. It not only says that God is in everything, and everything in God, but God becomes everything. To the one having the true knowledge, all is God. It is the सर्वं ब्रह्मिष्वदं ब्रह्म of the Chandogya.

But the central teaching of the Isopanishad is found in the enigmatical verses IX to XIV. Here the author condemns both विद्या and अविद्या, समूति and असमूति, two pairs of contradictory paths. Sankara interprets अविद्या as ceremonial works, अग्निहोत्रादिकां वाच्मी and विद्या as knowledge of Gods देवज्ञान. What the author really means by them is not easy to define. Verse 9 says

those who serve or are devoted to जापया enter into the regions of darkness, and those who serve विद्या enter into still greater darkness. This is somewhat surprising. The Upanishads, in general, inculcate devotion to knowledge in preference to work. Here not only विद्या and अविद्या are deprecated but the devotee of knowledge (विद्या) is said to enter into deeper darkness. Possibly what the author means is condemnation of the exclusive devotion to *karma* work or *jnana* (knowledge) and enjoins the harmonious cultivation of both knowledge and action. Ramanuja understands it in that sense. The next verse seems to warrant such an interpretation, as it says: having crossed death by action, one enjoys immortality by knowledge. If this interpretation is correct we have already an attempt of reconciliation or harmony of *jnana* and *karma* which was taken up more earnestly by the Bhagavad Gita. Any how the few verses of the Isopanishad are a remarkable product of the age and it is no wonder that this Upanishad has been held in high regard by successive generations of thinkers.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

# KATHA UPANISHAD

The Katha Upanishad is one of the finest of the Upanishads, and is deservedly most popular. It is divided into two chapters of three *Vallis* each. It has been variously associated with the Yajur Veda, the Sama Veda, and the Atharva Veda. But generally, it is considered as one of the Atharvana Upanishads. It is a dialogue between Yama, the god of death and Nachiketa, a Brahmin youth, the son of the Rishi *Vajasravasa*.

Vajasravasa, according to the usual custom of the age, being desirous of rewards performed the sacrifice in which he gave away many gifts to the Brahmins. His young son Nachiketa who was watching the proceedings noticed that his father was giving away old and useless cows to the Brahmins. He did not like this ungenerous act of his father and said to him, "Father to whom will you give me" ?

Vajasravasa was irritated at this conduct of his son and turned round in anger and said, "To death I give thee".

The story is to be found also in the Brahmana of the Taittiriya Yayur Veda, III. i. 8, and perhaps that is the reason why the Katha Upanishad has been ascribed to the Yajurveda. The story in the Brahmana of the Taittiriya Yajurveda is continued as follows : "Then came a voice to the young Gautama as he stood up. 'He thy father said, go away to the house of death, I give thee to death.' Go therefore to death when he is not at home

and dwell in his house for three nights without eating. If he should ask thee 'Boy, how many nights hast thou been here ?' Say 'three'. When he asks thee, 'What didst thou eat the first night?' Say 'Thy offspring'. 'What didst thou eat the second night ?' Say 'Thy cattle' 'what didst thou eat the third night?' Say 'Thy good work'. This portion is not to be found in the Katha Upanishad. But the Katha Upanishad as well as the Brahmana of the Taittiriya Yajurveda says that Nachiketa went to the house of Yama during his absence and stayed there three nights without eating. Yama on his return was distressed to find that the Brahmin guest had dwelt in his house three nights without eating and offered Nachiketa three boons as a penance for the sin. Nachiketa asked as the first boon that his father might be free from anxiety and anger, and might recognise and greet him when he would be dismissed by him. For the second boon he asked that Yama might instruct him about the fire which leads to heaven where there is no old age, hunger, thirst or death. Yama readily granted this boon also, and further added that this fire shall be called after him *Nachiketa*. For the third boon Nachiketa asked "There is a doubt about what happens to a man after death. Some say He is, others say He is not; instruct me as to the truth of this." Yama was unwilling to impart the secret of the future of a man after death, and offered Nachiketa anything else that he might desire instead of this knowledge. But Nachiketa remained firm, and would not accept anything else but what he had asked for. Yama was pleased with the noble determination of Nachiketa and at last proceeded to reveal to him the secret.

Then follows the discourse which extends over the next five chapters. The first chapter is a pretty setting to this discourse like the well-known setting of the Bhagavat Gita.

The Katha Upanishad thus purports to be a revelation of the secret of the existence after death, but actually in the five chapters there is not much about life after death, though they deal with many important questions of metaphysics and theology, the chief among them being the nature of Brahman. The Katha Upanishad, however, still continues to be regarded, as a revelation on the subject of life after death, and has been enjoined to be, and is generally read at funeral ceremonies. On this important question of life after death or the nature of the human soul, the Katha Upanishad has some very pregnant and profound sayings. In the second section of the first chapter, speaking of the soul it is declared, "Knowing self is not born, dies not. He sprang from nothing and nothing sprang from them. He is unborn, eternal, everlasting and ancient. He is not destroyed, when the body is killed. If the killer thinks that he kills and the killed thinks that he is killed both of them do not know (the truth). He kills not neither nor is he killed." Verse 18-19. Here we have a clear and emphatic declaration, not only of the immortality but also of the eternity of the soul. The Bhagavad Gita has adopted these verses as its own, and the idea of the eternity of the soul which has permeated all subsequent Hindu thought may be said to have its origin here. In a subsequent verse (II. ii. 7.) it is said that after death, some embodied beings enter into the womb, in order to have a body. Others enter into immovable things accord-

ing knowledge. Here again we have an explicit declaration of the idea of the transmigration of the human soul, which pervaded all subsequent Indian thought, orthodox and heterodox. Even Budhism which did not recognise the existence of the soul believed in the formation of new organisms, in accordance with the quality of the past *Karma*. That is about all that we have in the *Katha Upanishad* regarding the nature and the future of the human soul, which it professed to proceed declaring with so much solemnity and preparation. There are however many fine passages about the nature of God and its relation with the finite soul. "God is spoken of as the great (Infinite) all-pervading, bodiless soul residing in changeful bodies, though Himself bodiless." I. ii. 28.

He is further spoken of as smaller than the small greater than the great, hidden in the cave (heart) of this living creature." I. ii. 20.

Then there are the two beautiful verses in the second Valli of the second chapter. (verse 12. 13.)

"एकोवशी सर्वभूतान्तराका एकं रूपं बहुधा यः करोति । तमात्मस्थ येऽनुपश्यन्ति धीरा स्तेषां सुखं शाश्वतं नेतरेषां ॥" "The one controller, the indwelling self of all beings who makes the one form manifold, whom, the wise see in their own souls, theirs is everlasting bliss, not of others" and "जित्योऽनित्यनाम् चेतनः चेतनानाम् एको बहुनां यो विदधाति कामान् । तमात्मस्थ येऽनुपश्यन्ति धीरा स्तेषां शान्तिः शाश्वती नेतरेषां ॥"

"The eternal among the changing, the consciousness of the conscious (beings) who though One, dispenses to many the objects of their desires. Whom the wise see

as residing in their souls  
of others."

He is also spoken of as "the person, who awakes a while all else is, sleep making one desirable thing after another, that indeed is the bridget, that is Brahman, that is called immortal. In Him all the worlds are established, nothing oversteps Him." God is spoken of repeatedly and emphatically as the indwelling spirit of all beings "सर्वभूतान्तरामा" (verse II. ii. 9. 10. 11.)

God is also spoken of as life from whom all that exist have sprung. (Chapter. II. iii. 2).

"Out of fear for Him fire gives heat, out of fear for Him sun gives light. (II. iii. 3.)

Adverting about the relation of the human soul with God they are described as shadow and light, entered, into the cave (of the heart) drinking their rewards, in the world of their own works, dwelling on the highest summit. (I. iii. 1.)

ऋतं पिबन्ति सुखातस्य खोके  
गुहाम् प्रविष्टौ परमे पराहें ।  
क्षयातपो ब्रह्मविद्या वदन्ति  
पश्चान्यो ये च दृष्टाचिकेताः ॥

This is rather a confused adaptation of verse शास्त्रपत्री  
सबुजा सख्यात्प खया समानं हृषं परिषस्जाते । दयोरन्नः पिप्पल  
स्वाहत्तर्गनश्चदत्यो भभिचाकशोति ॥

"Two beautifully winged birds, friends inseperable, together cling to the same tree. One of them eats sweet fruits, the other looks on without eating,"—originally to be found Rigveda (I. 164. 20) and adopted verbatim in Mundak Upanished. (III. 1. 1.) and Swetasvatara Upanishad (IV. 6).

In the original, of the two birds, only one is said to

eat sweet fruits, while the other without eating simply looks on. The Mundaka and Swetaswatara Upanishads have taken over the verse without any change. The two birds have been interpreted as the finite soul and God. The two are inseparably united as friends, and dwell together in the same tree (i.e. body). But the one the finite soul eats sweet fruits, that is, enjoys the consequences of its actions, while the other God simply looks on, that is, not affected by the action of the finite soul. Here, though the finite soul and the infinite God has been said to be two friends always united together and dwelling in the somebody, God is not touched by the actions of this partner. The Mundaka and Swetaswatara Uponishads have taken over the verse without any change. But the Katha Upanishad, while taking over the idea, that the two dwell together in the same place and are united together as light and shadow make both eat the fruits of good works. This is not consistent with the orthodox view, nor is it consistent with commonsense. God can not be said to be affected by the actions of the human soul.

The Katha Upanishad has repeatedly indicated the fruits of knowing God. It is as in other Upanishads the attainment of immortality. “य एतद्विद्वन्नासे भवन्ति ।” II. iii. 16. “Those who know Him become immortal.” This is the common aim and end of knowing God according to all Upanishads. The words असृत and असृतस्य Immortality are very common in the Upanishadic literature. But, what is meant by immortality? Elsewhere there may be considerable doubt as to the meaning of the phrase. Sometimes it would seem to mean deathlessness, freedom from physical death.

But the Katha Upanishad, clear what it means by immortality. The Katha Upanishad at least does not use the word in the sense of physical death. Here it means overcoming the desires. “यदा सर्वे प्रसुध्यन्ते कामा येऽस्यहृदिस्थिता । अथमत्तुंगमृतोभवत्यद ब्रह्मसमुश्नते ॥” II. ii. 14. “When all the desires that entwine round his heart are loosened then the mortal becomes immortal and obtains Brahman.” “यदा सर्वे प्रभिद्यन्ते छृथस्येष्व गन्धयः अथ मर्त्येऽमृतो भवत्ये एतावत् अनुशासनम् ।” (II. iii. 11.) ‘When all the knots of the heart are snapped here, then the mortals become immortal, that is the teaching.’ So it is clear that by immortality Katha Upanishad means freedom from desires.

A very remarkable, it may be said a unique, feature of the Katha Upanishad, is its ethical emphasiss. The Katha Upanishad, is characterised by a lofty moral earnestness. The discourse of Yama, begins with the drawing of a distinction between right and wrong. Though, Yama professed to speak of the secret of life after death, he commences the discourse by saying “The right is one thing, pleasure is another thing. These two having different objects bind a man. It is well with him who accepts the good. But he who chooses the pleasant falls off from the object of life.” (I. ii. 1.) Here the opposition between right and pleasant श्रेय and प्रेय duty and pleasure is very pointedly emphasised. The writer continues the good and the pleasant confront a man. The wise man, closely examines and distinguishes them. The wise indeed prefer the right to the pleasant ; but the wicked choose the pleasant owing to desire for gain and possesion. The moral earnestness of the writer re-appears else-

where as well. With an unmistakable ring of conviction the writer lays down the dictum.

"One who has not stopped from evil conduct, who is not tranquil, and self controlled, whose mind is not at rest, cannot obtain God by knowledge."

"नाविरतो दुष्कृतादा शान्तो ना समाहितः ।

नाशान्त मानसो वापि प्रज्ञा नेनैनमाप्नुयात् ॥" I. ii. 22.

This is remarkable for an Upanishad. Here ज्ञान (Jnan) has been undervalued and moral integrity has been placed above it. The previous verse (1. 2. 21) is even more remarkable almost curious. It approaches the Christian doctrine of Election नायमाला प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेनवभिवनै हृणुते तेन लभ्य—तस्यैष आला हृणुते तत् स्वाम्" (I. ii. 23.) "This self cannot be gained by the reading of the scriptures nor by keen intellect, nor by much learning. He is attainable by him only whom He chooses. This self chooses his body (Him) as his own."

It is marvellously, like the Christian doctrine, is unique not only in the Upanishad but in the entire Hindu literature, previous to the rise of the Vaishnava school. Altogether, the Katha Upanishad is a very remarkable product of the age.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE TAITTIRIYA UPANISHAD.

The Taittiriya Upanishad originally formed a part of Taittiriya Aranyaka forming the seventh, eighth and ninth *prapathaka* of the same. As an Upanishad it is divided into three chapters which however are called the *Vallis*. These in their turn are divided into a number of sections called the *Anuvakas*.

The Taittiriya Upanishad, as it has come down to us, consists of three chapters. Of these the second and third deal with an identical subject of profound significance with which the opening chapter has little connection. The opening chapter stands apart from the rest of the treatise by its language, which is more *archaic* and evidently indicates a remote a period of composition. Its earlier origin is further confirmed by frequent references to Vedic deities, which is very rare in the Upanishads in general, and is not found in the rest of the Taittiriya Upanishads.

The chapter opens with invocation to the Vedic gods, Mitra, Varuna, Aryama, Indra, Brihaspati and Vishnu,

“शं नो मित्रः शं वरुणः शं नो भवत्यर्थामा ।

शं न इन्द्रो हृषस्ति: शं नो विष्णु उद्ग्रहमाः ॥”

a verse taken from the Rig Veda I. 90. 9.

In the next passage though obeisance is offered to the Upanishadic deity Brahman, Vayu is coupled with and the latter is declared to be the veritable Brahman :

“नमो ब्रह्मणे नमस्ते वायो त्वमेव प्रत्यक्षं ब्रह्मासि । त्वमेव प्रत्यक्षं  
ब्रह्म वदिष्यामि ।” Tait. U. I. 1.

Elsewhere or more than once prominent reference is made to the Vedic gods.

This chapter appears to be primarily a treatise of the forest school. The author expresses repeated desire for many scholars. “आप्यायन् ब्रह्मचारिणः स्वाहा । विमायन् ब्रह्मचारिणः स्वाहा । प्रह्यायन् ब्रह्मचारिणः स्वाहा ।” Taittiriya Upanishad I. 4. “May scholars come to me, may scholars come to me swiftly, may they come to me from all directions.” “यथापः प्रवतायन्ति । यथा मासा अहर्जरम् एवं मा ब्रह्मचारिणः धातरायन् सर्वतः स्वाहा ।” Taittiriya Upanishad I. 4. “As water goes to the lower level, as the months enter into the year so many scholars come to me, O Lord.” The disaloofness of this section of the treatise from the Upanishad teachings proper is also indicated by frequent prayers for earthly things : “यशो अनेऽसानि स्वाहा । श्रेयान् वस्त्रसोऽसानि स्वाहा ॥” Taittiriya Upanishad I. 4. “May I be famous among men ; may I be more exalted than the rich.” “आवृहन्तो वितन्वाना कुर्वाणा चौरमालनः वासाभ्यसि मम गवदः । अवपाने च सर्वदा । ततो मेश्यमावह । लोमग्ने पशुभि सह स्वाहा ।” Taittiriya Upanishad I. 4. “May (Fortune) bring unto me quickly and always clothes, food and drink. These bring unto me fortune of wool with cows.” The opening chapter has no connection with the rest of the treatise. It is a somewhat disjointed collection of stray and heterogenous subjects.

The next verse professes to deal with matters pertaining to study “ॐ शौक्षां व्याख्यायास्यामः वर्णं स्वरः मात्रा वस्त्रम् ॥” Tait. U. I. 2. “We shall explain phonetics, letters, vowels, accents, etc.” But the matter ends there and there is no mention of these subjects in the sequel. It is possible that it formed a part of treatise on those

subjects, but somehow go ..... was tacked to this Upanishad. The chapter concludes with noble exhortation to the student when he prepares to go home after the conclusion of his period of study, which alone should make it immortal.

The main teaching for which the Taittiriya Upanishad occupies a high position in the Upanishad literature is the memorable declaration that the Brahman is *Anand* repeated with great emphasis in both the second and third chapters in different places. What is the exact significance of the statement that Brahman is *Anand* we shall try to understand later on. Here we find at once that the Vedic world of thought is left far behind ; there is no question of Indra, Agni, Vayu, or of the ultimate deity being identified with any of these. The Taittiriya is impatient of any compromise or speculation about the popular Vedic deities. It boldly declares, "know the Brahman, from whom all these beings grow, by whom the created beings live and unto whom they enter when gone from here." "यतो इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते येन यातानि जोवन्ति यत्प्रयन्त्यभिसंविश्वन् । तद्विजिज्ञासस्तु तत् ब्रह्मेति ।" Tait. U. III. 1. It is further declared that the Brahman can be known only by earnest effort and deep meditation "तपसा ब्रह्मविजिज्ञासस्तु ।" Tait. U. III. 2.

It is the second and third chapters which lend its unique value to the Taittiriya Upanishad for here is enunciated a conception of the universe, which considering the age in which the treatise was composed is marvellous, for here the writer declares with great emphasis that the Ultimate Reality in the Universe is 'Love' (आनन्द). But though there is no disposition

[REDACTED] to confound [REDACTED] with any of the Vedic gods, there is a new tendency to identify him with some other principles. The Brahman or the ultimate principle is by turns declared to be matter, life, consciousness, and knowledge. In the second chapter of the Taittiriya it is first declared that Anna, literally food, is Brahman. Here अन्न by अन्न is evidently meant matter, though the form in which matter is best known and prized by men is prominent in view. It is this food or matter which is first declared to be Brahman or the ultimate reality of the universe. And a very plausible reason for this identification is given. The principle had been enunciated that that from which the beings have grown, by which they are sustained is Brahman. It is well-known that from matter or food beings grow and by food created beings are sustained. "अनाहूतानि जायन्ते । जातान्वयेन वर्षते ।" Tait. U. III. 2. So matter or food is the ultimate reality.

The Taittiriya Upanishad after a searching analysis of the constitution of the universe, arrives at the profound truth that the ultimate reality behind the visible universe is *Anandam* or in modern popular phraseology "God is Love." This is the subject matter of both the second and third chapters of the Taittiriya Upanishad. It lends the treatise a unique significance not only in the Upanishad literature but in the history of development of the religious ideas of humanity. For considering the age in which it was composed one cannot but marvel at the vision of the Rishi who realised Love as the ultimate reality of the universe. It was not a mere guess ; the author arrives at this conclusion by a progressive analysis of the constitution of the universe step by step. To

the question what is Brahman? The answer is returned that "Brahman is food or matter" "अत्र ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात् ।" Tait. U. I. 9. This is the reply of the materialists of the present day. And this was not an altogether silly guess. Even now, after centuries of advance in experience and thought there are people who consider matter to be the ultimate reality of the universe. But the Rishis of the Upanishads did not take long to outgrow this superficial view. They soon realised that behind matter there was a subtler and higher reality viz., life; so the Taittiriya Upanishad said "तत्त्वादृष्टमयात् अन्योऽन्तरः आत्मा प्राणमयः । तेनैष पूर्णः ।" Tait. U. II. 4. "Above this material essence there is the essence of life. This universe is filled by it." But not even here the insight of the sages stopped. They realised a higher and still higher reality. Step by step the sages of the Upanishads rose from matter to life, life to mind, mind to self-consciousness, and from self-consciousness to Ananda. "तत्त्वादृष्टप्राणमयात् । अन्योऽन्तरः आत्मा मनोमयः । तेनैष पूर्णः ।" Tait. U. II. 3. "Deeper than this essence of life there is another essence, viz, mind, this universe is filled by it." "तत्त्वा एतमात्मोमयात् । अन्योऽन्तर आत्मा विज्ञानमयः । तेनैष पूर्णः ।" "Higher than mind there is another essence, viz, Reason, the Universe is filled with it." "तत्त्वादृष्टविज्ञानमयात् अन्योऽन्तर आत्मा आनन्दमयः । तेनैष पूर्णः ।" Tait. U. II. 3. Higher than the essence of Reason, there is a deepest reality, viz. Ananda. The universe is filled with it.

Now what is this Ananda, which the Taittiriya Upanishad declares to be the highest reality? The gradual penetration into the heart of the ultimate reality

of the universe from matter onwards is significant indeed. There can be no doubt that the Aryan mind went deeper and deeper in search of the mystery of the universe, and the successive stages along which it marched are correct. It is but natural that at first matter was looked upon as the ultimate reality ; but deeper meditation revealed that behind matter there was a more mysterious reality viz, life ; and further deeper than life there was mind ; above mind the Taittiriya recognises a still higher reality, which is called the 'विज्ञानमयः आत्मा' possibly by it the higher understanding or Reason is to be understood ; it is the principle which distinguishes man from animals, and the highest of all the Supreme Reality is Ananda. This Ananda is declared to be the Highest Reality, by which all else is sustained. "को ह्येवान्यात् कः पाणात् यदेष आकाशं आनन्दं न स्यात्" Tait. U II. 5 "Who could move or who could live if this Ananda were not in the heavens." Bhrgu Vruruni approaches his father and says, "Teach me, master about Brahman." The father advises him to know the Brahman by arduous meditation. Bhrgu follows his father's advice and arrives at the conclusion *matter is Brahman*. His father advises him to continue the search further and so step by step he arrives at the final conclusion *Brahman is Ananda*. He traverses the same ground and arrives at the identical conclusion though in a different form.

The question for us now is : what is meant by Ananda ? Ananda has been translated as bliss. But I am decidedly of opinion that by Ananda was meant what we call *Love*. From matter to life and life to mind and reason there is a natural transition ; and

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higher than reason is *Love*. The ultimate reality in the universe is *Love*. The Rishi of the Taittiriya realised this supreme truth : *the Brahman is love*, or in modern phraseology *God is Love*. It is doubtful whether the third chapter comes from the same source as the second or came from a different source and brought here owing to similarity of ideas. The similarity of ideas and expressions are so close that they can have hardly come from two different sources. At the same time why such identical ideas should be repeated without any addition or variation ?

Here Bhrigu, the son of Varuna, went to his father and asked to be instructed about Brahman. Varuna declared the familiar verse, which has been the well-known definition of God in the language of the Upanishads— “यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते । येन जातानि जीवन्ति, यत् । प्रयन्ति अभिसंविशन्ति । तद्विजज्ञामस्य । तत्त्वद्वा ।” Tait. U.III.1.

He is the Brahman. He can only be known by earnest meditation. Bhrigu according to the instruction of his father engaged himself in meditation and by meditation realised the truth that “Brahman is matter or food (अन्न). From matter all these things have been born, by matter all these created beings live and unto matter they enter when gone from here.” Tait. III. 2.

Bhrigu again went to his father and told him the result of his meditation. The father asked him to seek further and go deeper by deeper meditation. Bhrigu again engaged himself in meditation and realized the deeper truth that God is life. “प्राणो ब्रह्मेति अज्ञानात्” Tait. III. 2. and so on. Bhrigu rises unto the deeper and deeper truth step by step from life to mind, mind to understanding and understanding to the highest truth that ‘God is Love’ as in

the second chapter. This has been called the *Bhargavi Varuni Vidya*.—the revelation named after Bhrigu and Varuna and is declared to have been established in the highest heaven. Verily it deserves to be called the highest revelation so far vouchsafed to men. All the succeeding centuries of wonderful progress in science and philosophy have not been able to outgrow this finding of the Rishis of the Upanishads that the Brahman is Anandam. God is Love From Love have all beings been born and by love all created beings live. For this supreme insight into the heart of the Universe, the Taittiriya Upanishad may well be considered as the highest landmark in the march of thought in the Upanishadic literature.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### THE MUNDAKOPANISHAD

The Mundaka Upanishad is one of the puerst gems of the Upnishadic literature, being of uniformly high order, and almost entirely free from inferior matters. It is an Upnishad of Atharva veda, and is divided into three Mundakas of two sections each. Thus the whole treatise is divided into six chapters but not in any regular method or logical division in the contents.

The opening verses purport to give the origin of treatise, which is, of course, of not any historical value. It is said to have been taught by Brahma, the maker and preserver of the world to his eldest son, Atharva, who in his turn taught it to Angira, and Angira to Satyabahu, the descendant of Bharadwaja, and the descendant of Bharadwaja to the family of Angirasa as coming down from superiors to inferiors. The immediate teacher of the Mundaka Upanishad was one Angirasa who spoke it to Sanaka, a great house-holder who came to him and asked : what is that on knowing which all this becomes known—a question, it will be noted, almost identical with that asked by Uddalaka Aruni to his son Swetaketu in the Chandogya Upnishad. In reply the sage lays down a broad distinction between the *Karmakanda* and *Inanakanda* which are respectively called the inferior and the superior knowledge. The four Vedas, and the six accessory sciences are called the inferior

knowledge, that by which the eternal is known, that is the **Upanishads**, is called the superior knowledge.

In the second chapter, the practice of Vedic rites is enjoined with much apparent earnestness. “तात्त्वा-चरणं नियन्तम् सत्यकामा । एष व. पन्था सुकृतस्य लोके ॥” Mundakopanishad I. ii. 1. “Practise them constantly with firm resolve; this is the means of obtaining fruits of your action.” But it is presently found out that the sage is really condemning them as inferior. “Fools living in darkness in various ways, flutter themselves with the thought we are successful. Since those, who are devoted to deeds, do not know (the truth) on account of attachment. When the fruits of their deeds are exhausted, they come back and become subject to sorrow. Fools considering sacrifices and beneficial deeds as the highest, know no other good. Enjoying pleasure, in heaven, guided by good deeds, they re-enter this or an inferior world. Those wise men with tranquil hearts who live in the forest on alms, and practice discipline and reverence become sinless and repair through the way of the sun, where lives the immortal, undecaying person.” Munduk, I-ii-9-10-11. The futility of the Vedic ceremonies could not have been condemned more ruthlessly.

Verses, indicating the nature of the supreme reality are not many in the Mundaka Upanishad. But a special feature of this Upanishad is that it has tried to specify the nature of the creation and the relation of the created world with the creator by a number of illustrations. Thus creation has been compared to the spinning-thread by a spider and the growth of the plants from the earth and the growth of hairs on human body.

यथोर्णनाभिः सूजते

यथा पृथिव्यामोषधयः

यथा सतः पुरुषात् केशलोमानि

तथा चरात् सभवतोऽ विश्वम् ॥ Munduk. I. i. 7.

"As a spider gives out and takes in (its thread), as plants grow on the earth, as hairs come out from a living person, so in this world, does every thing come out of the undecaying One."

The creation has also been compared to the coming out of sparks from a blazing fire :

यथा सुदीप्तात् पावकादिस्फुलिङ्गाः

सयसशः प्रवयन्ते स्वरूपाः ।

तथा चरात् विविधाः स्मृत्य भावाः

प्रजायन्ते तत्र चैवापियन्ति ॥ Munduk II. i. 1.

"As sparks, similar to itself come of a blazing fire by thousands, so, my dear, various creatures come out of the undecaying One and also return to it." These illustrations prove that creation is only coming out of what already existed potentially in the Brahman. The Mundaka Upanishad has quite a number of verses, alike grand in conception and beautiful in language about the creation of the universe from the ultimate reality.

Another special feature of the Mundaka Upanishad, is the indication of the process of knowing God. There are several verses on the subject in this Upanishad. It has been declared generally that the knowledge of God is not for the week-minded. "नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन ज्ञायः" Munduk. III. ii. 3. The Mundaka Upanishad, makes it abundantly clear that the knowledge of God involves long and arduous effort. Coming into details it distinctly lays that God cannot be seen by the eyes

nor can it be comprehended by any other senses, nor can be attained by asceticism (तपसा) or by (meritorious) deeds.

“न चक्षुषा गृह्णते नापि वाचा ।  
नान्येद्वै स्तुपसा कर्मणा वा ॥” Munduk. III. i. 8.

“He cannot be attained by the eye, nor by speech, nor by the other senses. It cannot be obtained by austerities and deeds.”

It is further laid down that the knowledge of God cannot be attained by the mere reading of scriptures nor by recitation of texts, nor by keen intellect. The Mundaka Upanishad compares the process of divine knowledge to that of hitting a distant object with an arrow. God is the target, the soul is the arrow and Om or Pranava is the bow, and as the skilful archer hits the target with diligent and careful attention so the devoted seeker, can know God, by careful attention. On the positive side it is said that God can be attained by the practice of truth, by complete knowledge, by Tapasya and Brahmacharva.

“सत्येन लभ्य स्तुपसाज्ञेष आत्मा  
सम्यक् ज्ञानेन ब्रह्मचर्येण नित्यम् ।” Munduk III. i. 5.

“This self is always attainable by truth, by discipline, by right Knowledge and Brahmacharya.”

This is a very true and profound saying. Everyone of the four conditions laid down for the attainment of God, suggests a world of thought, but we cannot linger on this aspect of the question fascinating and agreeable though it is. We may just add a word to clear off an apparent contradiction between this verse and one already quoted in which it has been declared that God cannot be attained by तपसा Munduk. III. i. 8. Here on

the other hand the sage lay down ~~as~~ as one of the conditions of knowing God. The contradiction is only in form. What the writer means is that God cannot be known by mere asceticism, but surely true self-control and earnest meditation are essential help for the knowledge of God. In another verse the sage has discovered, a still deeper truth, namely : God can be seen when the inmost heart has been purified by knowledge.

**ज्ञानप्रमादेन विशुद्धसत्त्व ।**

**स्ततस्तु लभ्यते निकलम् ध्यायमानः ॥ Munduk III. i. 8.**

"When one is purified through pure Knowledge, he perceives that indivisible one by meditation."

This is remarkable for its insight and close similarity with the saying of Jesus : "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God". Mathew Chapter V. 8. Both Jesus and the writer of the Mundaka Upanishad, reserve the beatitude of God-vision for the pure-hearted. It is to be noted that in both these scriptures the term used for the process is *seeing* and not *knowing*. Jesus says, *They shall see God*. The Mundaka Upanishad likewise uses the word पश्यते ! The Upanishad however, emphasises the importance of knowledge as well as for the attainment of God. In a previous verse already referred to, we have seen that complete knowledge has been declared to be one of the conditions of knowing God. Here, knowledge is said to be the means of attaining purity of the heart. It would seem that according to Mundaka Upanishad purity of heart is final and essential condition of seeing God, and Brahmacharya, *Tapash* (तपस) *practice of truth and complete knowledge* are the means of attaining the purity of heart.

The Mundaka Upanishad, lays down another curiously remarkable dictum on the question of attaining God. In the second section of the third Mundaka after saying that the Supreme Spirit cannot be attained by vast learning and keen intellect, it is declared, that he can be attained by him only whom He chooses. That spirit elects him as his own body or self.

“यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्य-

स्तस्यैष आत्मा वृणुते तनूम् स्वाम् ।” Munduk. III. ii. 8.

“He is obtainable by him alone whom he elects. To him this self reveals his own nature.”

This is marvellously akin to the *Calvinistic doctrine of election*. There can be no suggestion of borrowing on either side. It must be said that the same, spiritual fact has been discerned independently, by two teachers far apart in age and clime. The Mundaka Upanishad is very explicit on the subject of knowing of God or God-vision, and its teaching on this question is very important. The saying that God elects him whom he chooses, is the germ, of the later doctrine of grace in the Bhakti movement in the subsequent history of religious development in India.

The Mundaka Upanishad has also some important pronouncement, on the subject of the result of knowing God. As the final result of knowing God, the individual is said to become, immortal (अमृत ) Mundak III. ii. 9. What is meant by becoming immortal has fortunately been specified by the sage in the same verse. He becomes, released from the knots of the heart, and, crosses or overcomes, sorrow and sin. It is further declared that one who knows God, becomes God, “स योऽहं वै तत्परम्

## IDENTIFICATION

**ब्रह्म वेद ब्रह्मै च भवतु ।”** Munduk III. ii. 9. This idea is to be found, but it is not quite unique in the Mundaka Upanishad, but it is to be occasionally found elsewhere in some other Upanishads. The exact nature of this identification of the knower with Brahman, seems to have been specified in the following verse—

यथा नद्यः स्थन्दमानाः समुद्रे  
 इस्ते गच्छन्ति नामरूपे विहाय ।  
 तथा विहानाम रूपाहिमुक्तः  
 परात्परं पुरुषसुपेति दिव्यम् ॥ Munduk III. ii. 8.

“As rivers, flowing to the ocean, enter into it using its name and form, so (one) knowing (God) enters into the divine person who is higher than the high being released from name and form.” That is to say the individual on having attained the knowledge of God loses its separate existence, and he is merged into God. This of course is the well-known monistic theory, which was fully developed by Sankara in later times. Altogether the Mundaka Upanishad is one of the most important of the upanishadic literature, many of the important doctrines of this school being clearly defined in it.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE KENOPANISHAD.

The Kenopanishad is a beautiful treatise in the best Upanishadic style, having a unity of purpose though perhaps not a unity of authorship. The last twenty-one verses (14-34) from the style appear to have been the composition of an earlier age, which were tacked by the author of the first thirteen verses as they admirably confirmed his views by a parable.  
The entire Upanishad is a beautiful composition of the Upanishadic conception of God, particularly with reference to His relation to the human understanding. The subject is introduced with the query, propelled by whom the mind, the life, the senses go to their respective objects and do their works.

केनेषितं पतति प्रेषितं मनः केन प्राणः प्रथमः पैति युक्तः ।  
केनेषितां वाचमिमां वदन्ति चहुः श्रीवं क उ देवो युनक्ति ।

Kena, I. i.

“Under whose leading does the understanding go to its object ? Under whose leading does the vital power, the chief of the internal organs, does it work ? Under whose leading do people utter these words, and what God leads the eyes and the ears to their subject ?”

It is to be noted that it is not the wonders of the external world that stimulate this searching inquiry ; the question is not who is it that moves the sun and the moon and the stars in their trackless paths, not who it is that has created the earth and the heavens. The problem which stirs the wonder of the sage more pro-

foundly and intimately the mystery of the human mind. How is it that the mind, the vital powers, the organ of the speech, the eyes and the ears do their work? And the answer is that there is one who is the ear of the ear, the mind of mind, the life of life, and the eye of eye. "श्रीवस्य श्रीतं मनसो मनो यदाच्चो ह वाचेण स उ प्राणस्य प्राणस्तुष्टुष्टुष्टुः ।" "By whom the senses, the life and the mind are sustained and regulated. Kena I. 2. Then follow number of verses sublime in insight and beautiful in expression indicating the nature of that underlying Reality.

**“न तद चर्गच्छति न वागच्छति नो मनो**

न विद्मो न विजानीमो यथैतदनुशिष्टात् ॥” Kena I. 2:

"The eye does not reach Him, neither speech nor mind; we do not know how to teach him nor even do we know him."

**“अन्यदेव तदितादथो अविदितादधि ।**

इति शुश्र म पूर्वेषां ये नस्तद्वाचक्षिरे ॥” Ken. I. 3.

"He is above the known as well as above the unknown. So we have heard from our predecessors who spoke of Him".

“यस्मानसा न मनुते येनाहुर्मनो मतम् ।

तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विहि नेह यदिदं उपासते ॥” Kena I. 4.

"Who cannot be comprehended by the mind who is said to know the mind He is the Brahman, know him, and not this that you worship."

“यत् प्राणेन न प्राणिति वैष्णवः प्राणीयते ।

तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेहै यद्विद्वसुपापत्ते ॥” Kena 1. 8.

"That which people do not smell with the organ of smelling, that by which the power of smelling is led—know that alone to be Brahman. It is not this—what people worship."

## ANSWER TO

And yet it is not agno-  
may be said to have answer-  
despair of the modern Agni  
recognises the limitation of the human mind. Nowhere  
has the grandeur of the Infinite been more vividly  
related.

“न तत्र चक्षुर्गच्छति न वागगच्छति न मनो ।”

But at the same time we are not in utter darkness.

“नाहं मम्ये सुविदिति नो न विदिति वेद च ।

यो नस्तद्बेद तद्बेद नो न विदेति वेद च ॥” Kena II. 2.

“I do not think I know Brahman well I neither  
do not know it, nor know it. Whoever amongst us un-  
derstands the preposition, ‘it is not that I do not know  
it nor know it,’ does know it.”

“यस्यामतं तम्य मतं मतं यस्य न वेद सः ।

अविज्ञातं विज्ञानतां विज्ञातमविज्ञानतां ॥” Kena II. 3.

“He who thinks he knows Brahman does not  
know it, he who thinks he does not know Brahman,  
does know it. Brahman is unknown to the wise and  
known to the ignorant.”

The fundamental teaching of the Kenopanishad is  
that all power is of the Brahman, and it is by the  
power of Brahman that others live, move or do any-  
thing. To illustrate this truth a beautiful parable is  
narrated in the latter half of the book, which is prob-  
ably a work of independent and earlier origin. It is  
said that the Gods were victorious through the powers  
of Brahman in the war with the Asuras. But they  
ascribed the glory to themselves. The Brahman con-  
scious of their blind vanity appeared before them, but  
the gods could not understand who was this adorable  
Presence. Agni approached him when Brahman asked

him. And when Agni asked that he was Agni (of well known name). Brahman asked what are his powers? He replied that he could burn all that existed. Then the Brahman placed a straw before him, asking him to burn it. Agni tried his utmost but could not burn it. So he returned to the gods crestfallen and said he could not understand who was the Presence. Then the gods sent Vayu on the same errand and with a similar result. Finally Indra, the greatest among the gods was commissioned for the task, but as he approached the adorable Presence it vanished, but there appeared in the sky a goddess of transcendent splendour who on being asked explained to Indra that the adorable Presence was Brahman, by whose might they obtained victory.

The Upanishad concludes with the remarks that whoever knows this truth is established in the highest heaven having overcome all sins.

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## CHAPTER

# THE PRASNO PANISHAD.

Another Upanishad which purports to discuss certain fundamental questions like those of the Kenopanishad is the Prasnopanishad. The very name, which means the question or query, indicates the nature of the subject. The book consists of six chapters dealing with six questions which, however, are not so serious and searching as those of the Kenopanishad, nor the answers so profoundly illuminating. The book opens with the account of six seekers after truth who went to the sage Pippalada with a view to get some instruction regarding certain important questions. The sage having agreed to impart the knowledge if he happened to know it, one of the inquirers Kabandhi, son of Katya, asked, "whence have these creatures been born"? To him the sage replied, "the God of creatures, being desirous of having creatures, meditated. After meditation he created *Prana* and *Rayi*. From this couple all creatures are born." Then the Upanishad proceeds to explain who is Prajapati, the Lord of creatures and who are *Prana* and *Rayi*. Prajapati is said to be the year, and *Prana* the sun, and *Rayi*, the moon. Proceeding month is said to be the Lord of creatures, its bright half *Prana* and the dark half *Rayi*. Further on day and night are explained to be *Prana* and *Rayi*. Thus though the question raised is an important one, the answer is neither appropriate nor serious. It may be noted the answer is based on Taittiriya II. 6., which deals with the subject of creation. In the Taittiriya also the act of crea-

tion was produced by meditation. But whereas in the Taittiriya it is He, the Brahma, being desirous of many, meditated and having meditated created all these that exist—“सोऽकामयत् । वहु स्ता प्रजायेयेति । सो तपोऽतप्यत् । स तपस्त्वष्टा । इदृशं सर्वमस्तुजत् । यदिदं किञ्च ।” Taittiriya II. 6. “He wished—Let me become many, let me be born. He meditated and having meditated he created all this whatever there is,”—in the Prasnopanishad it is Prajapati who being desirous of having creatures, creates *Prana* and *Raya*, and not the creatures directly. *Prana* and *Raya* are the authors of subsequent creation. This is more in the style of the Brahmanas and the Puranas than of the Upanishads. The very name Prajapati reminds one of the Brahmanas and the Puranas. Anyhow the answer of the sage Pippalada is not of much importance.

The second chapter declares the supremacy of *Prana*, the Vital power. But its connection with the reply to the second question is not clear. The question asked by the second of the inquirers, Vaidarbhi, the son of Bhrigu, is—“कत्येव देवाः प्रजां विधारयन्ते । कतरं एतत् प्रकाशयन्ते । काः पुनरेषां वरिष्ठः ॥” Prasnopanishad II. 1. Translated literally this would mean, “how many gods keep what has been created, how many manifest this, and who is the greatest among them.” But from what follows it would appear that the question was, ‘who supports this body, or what powers support the body.’ The sage Pippalada replies it is ether, wind, fire, water, earth, speech, mind, eyes and ear. In reply to the second part of the question, he says that *Prana* is the greatest of these, though *Prana* is not mentioned as one of the powers supporting the body. The entire chapter is devoted to the glorification of *Prana*, the Vital power. The supremacy of *Prana*

is proved by practical demonstration. It does out all the other vital powers. The very same illustration occurs in the Chandogyopanishad, chapter V.

The third chapter continues the inquiry on *Prana*. The third inquirer, Kausalya, son of Aswala, asked the question : "whence does this *Prana* come ? How does it come with this body ? How does it go out ? How does it support what is without and what is within ?" The sage Pippalada admits the difficult nature of the questions. But in consideration of the earnestness of the inquirer he condescends to answer as follows :—“यथा समांडे वाधिक्षतान्विनियुक्ते । एतान् यामानेतान् यामानधितिष्ठवेत्य वस्त्रैष प्राणः इतरान् प्राणान् पृथक् पृथगीव संनिधत्ते ।” Prasnopani-shad III. 4. “As a king commands officials, saying to them to rule these villages or those, so does that *Prana* dispose the other *Pranas*, each for their separate work.” Then follows a fanciful division of the *Prana* into five *Prana* and their residence in the different parts of the body in the style of later casuistry.

The only important thing which may be said to be the most important contribution of the Prasnopanishad is that the *Prana* is born of the Self. “आत्मन एष प्राणो जायते ।” Prasna III. 3. “This *Prana* is born of the Self.” Declaring the exact process by which the *Prana* is born of *Atma*, it is stated “यद्यौ पुरुषे क्षायैतस्मिन्ब्रेतदाततं मनोऽतेनायात्यस्मिच्छरौरे ।” Prasnopanishad III. 3. “Like the shadow thrown on a man, this (the *Prana*) is spread out over it (the Brahman). By the resolve of the mind it comes into this body.” The meaning is not very clear. The *Prana* is said to come to the body by *Manokritena* “मनोऽतेन” Sankara renders

it as ~~the work of the mind~~. “मनः सङ्करा” । Max Muller translates it as “by the work of the mind” and adds to the note, “The good or evil deeds, which are the work of the mind.” Max Muller’s rendering fits in with the theory that the Soul assumes a body in accordance with the deeds of the past life.

The fourth chapter deals with the mystery of the sleeping and waking state. The fourth inquirer, Gargya, the son of Saurya, asked the question, “Sir, what are they that sleep in this man, and what are they that awake in him ? What power is it that sees dreams ? Whose is the happiness ? On what do all these depend ?” The answer of the sage Pippalada seems to amount to this, that during sleep all the senses are withdrawn and rest in the mind. Therefore the sleeping man does not see, or hear etc. The person who sees, hears etc., is said to rest in the Supreme Self. “म परेऽन्नरे आत्मनि सम्पूर्तिष्ठते ।” Prasnopanishad IV. 9. “He rests in the supreme undecaying Self.”

“विज्ञानात्मा सह देवैश्च सर्वैः  
प्राणा भूतानि संप्रतिष्ठन्ति यत् ।  
तदज्जरं वेदयते यस्तु सौम्य  
स सर्वज्ञः सर्वभेदाविवेश्वति ।” Prasnopanishad IV. 11.

“Indeed all things, water, air, fire etc. with their subtle elements are said to rest in the Supreme Self and he who knows the Supreme Self, becomes all-knowing.”

In the fifth chapter, the next inquirer, Satyakama the son of Sibi, asked the question, “What world does a man gain who meditates on the syllable *om* up to the time of death ?” The sage replies that the man who meditates on the first measure of the syllable *om* returns to this

world. If he meditates on *U*, he goes to Heaven. If he *U* Person with the help of the three measures, he reaches the Radiant Sun. This man gains this world by the Rig verses, Heaven by the Yajur verses, and by the Saman verses he gains that world of which the wise know. Verily, with the help of the syllable *Aum*, he obtains that which is calm, undecaying, immortal, fearless and the highest.

In the sixth and the last chapter, Sukeśa, the son of Bharadwaja, asked the question, "where is that person with sixteen parts?" The sage replies, "that person dwells in the human body itself, in whom these sixteen parts grow. What these sixteen parts are, is not specified. But the Person seems to be identified with the Supreme Self, as it is said that everything springs from His reason and merges in Him".

The sage Pippalada says that he who knows so far about the Supreme Brahman, has nothing higher than that. The inquirers returned satisfied with the instruction of the teacher.

On the whole, the Prasnopaniṣad does not reach the height of the more important Upaniṣads and may be classed among the Upaniṣads of the secondary importance.



## CHAP

# THE AITAREYA UPANISHAD.

The Aitareya is a small treatise of three chapters of which the last alone, consisting of four paragraphs, is of value to the Upanishadic literature. The first two chapters are more allied to the Brahmanas than the Upanishads. They deal with the subject of creation and are of the nature of Brahmanic speculations with the difference that instead of Prajapati, *Atma* is declared to have existed from the beginning.

It is only in the third chapter that the proper subject of an Upanishad is dealt with. Here the question is raised : who is the Self that is worshipped ? Is it that by which colour is seen, or that by which sound is heard, or that by which smell is smelt, or that by which speech is spoken or that by which taste is tasted ? And the ready and unfaltering answer given is that it is neither of these, which is the Self (*Atma*). All these, as well as Indra, Prajapati and all the Gods, and all creatures are established, guided and sustained by the Self, who is called *Prajna* (Reason) in the Aitareya, as has been called *Ananda* in the Taittiriya.

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## THE SWETASWATARA UPANISHAD.

Among the genuine and more important Upanishads, the Swetaswatara may safely be placed at the end of the collection. There are unmistakable marks of its later origin. The vigour and freshness, both in thought and language have visibly declined, and there are evident traces of laboured speculation and artificiality. It would seem that the treatise is the product of an age, when the creative originality which is characteristic of the Upanishadic literature has exhausted itself.

The Swetaswatara Upanishad is definitely associated with a particular name, at the close of the book. It is stated that it was spoken by the wise Rishi, Swetaswatara, to a revered band of sages, and there is no reason to doubt the authenticity of the statement. The Upanishad is known to belong to the Taittiriya or Black Yajur Veda.

The Swetaswatara Upanishad bears many marks of a comparatively later date in the Upanishadic age. Its conception of the Supreme Being, though fully reflecting the predominant colour of the Upanishadic period, has considerably advanced towards the later Bhakti movement. The name by which the Supreme Being is often called is *Dev* in the Swetaswatara, though the names, Atman and Brahman, are not altogether absent. The peculiarly Upanishadic form of indicating the Supreme Being by the indefinite name "Tat" (तत्) is also not rare in this Upanishad. But at the same time the

tendency to call the Supreme Being by what may be called a personal name is quite evident. The name that occurs oftenest in the *Swetaswatara* is Rudra. It is interesting to note that the later synonym of Rudra, Hara, has already made its appearance in this Upanishad.

“त्तरं प्रधानमनृताच्चरं हरः ।” Sweta. U. I. 10.

“That which is perishable is the *Pradhana*; the immortal and imperishable is Hara.”

The *Swetaswatara* Upanishad, like several others, opens with the inquiry regarding the mystery of existence. But it is to be noted here that the query is not about the mystery of thought and life but it is ‘whence have we come and what is the cause of life and existence?’ The technical term *cause* (कारण), which is so common in later speculations, has already made its appearance. A further mark of later origin is to be found in the second verse of the first Adhyaya, where a number of alternative answers to the query, regarding the cause of existence, which are known to have been propounded in later times, are stated and rejected.

“कालः स्वभावो नियतिर्यदच्छा  
भूतानि योनिः पुरुष इति चिन्त्यम् ।  
संयोग एषां न त्वामभावा-  
दात्माप्यनौशः सुखदःखहेतीः ॥” Sweta. U. I. 2.

“Should Time, Nature, Fate, Chance, the Elements or the *Purusha* be considered as the cause, the combination of these cannot be the cause, as it depends upon the Self. The Self is not the Lord as it is subject to pleasure and pain.” This verse points to the existence of various theories regarding the cause of the world, such as time, fate nature, chance, etc., which are not to be found in other Upanishads and are known to have been prevalent in

later times. The Swetaswatara Upanishad rejects these alternative theories and affirms the Upanishadic doctrine of Brahman or Atman to be the sole cause, but it is to be noted that it associates something else with Brahman in the act of creation. The Brahman creates the universe, but with the help of the Maya (Ch. IV 9th verse) or Pradhan (Ch. VI. 10). These are new terms and ideas which are absent or rare in the genuine Upanishads and are characteristic of a later age. The Brahman or creator is frequently spoken of as मायौ (Ch. IV. 10) having माया or lord of माया। Maya (माया) is explained as Nature ; and Mayi (मायो) as the Great Lord. “मायान्त् प्रकृतिं विद्यामायिनन्तु महेश्वरम् ।” (Sweta. U. IV. 10).

“Know then Prakriti (Nature) is Maya and the great Lord the Mayin.”

Elsewhere प्रधान is associated with Brahman in the act of creation.

“थेस्तर्णनाभ इवतन्तुभिः प्रधानजैः ।

स्वभावतो देव एक स्वमातृणोत् । Sweta. U. VI. 10.

“The one Lord, who has, out of his own nature, covered himself like a spider, with threads derived from *Pradhan* (प्रधान) ।” It is not quite clear what the writer means by the word (प्रधान). It is well-known at later stages of Hindu thought, *Pradhana* played an important part and became a technical term. In the Swetaswatara Upanishad *Pradhana* is explained as the transient as against God who is Indestructible and Immortal.

“क्षरम् प्रधानमसृताक्षरं हरः ।” Sweta. U. I. 10.

It is very significant that the very simile which has been used by Mundaka Upanishad in describing the process of creation namely, the spider spinning out threads, has been adopted by the Swetaswatara, but

the latter adds *Pradhana* to it, of which there is no mention in the Mundaka Upanishad. In the Swetaswatara, the thread is spoken of as born of *Pradhana* (तन्तुभिः प्रधानजैः). This is clearly a later development. There is no clue however to measure the interval. Similarly the beautiful passage, of the Katha Upanishad—“नित्योनित्यानाम् चेतनस्येतनामेको बद्धनां यो विदधाति कामान्” Sweta. U. VI. 13. “He is the Eternal among the eternals, the Thinker among thinkers, who, though One, fulfils the desires of many,”—has been taken over by the Swetaswatara, but in place of the third line has been substituted the following : “तत्कारणम् सांख्ययोगाधिगम्यं” which distinctly deteriorates the beauty of the original verse. But here we get a clue to the new developments in the Swetaswatara. It is evident that the Swetaswatara has been largely influenced by the Sankhya and Yoga philosophies which are distinctly mentioned by name in this line. There are numerous other traces of the influence of Sankhya philosophy in the Swetaswatara Upanishad. The mixture of the Sankhya theory of *Pradhana* has already been noticed.

Though of a comparatively later origin the Swetaswatara Upanishad must undoubtedly be classed among the genuine Upanishads, and its fundamental teachings are quite identical with those of other Upanishads. The unity and spirituality of the ultimate Reality behind the Universe are declared with great emphasis.

“एको हि रुद्रो न हितीयाय तस्य-

र्य इमालोकानौशत ईशनीभिः ॥” Sweta. U. III. 2.

“Rudra, who regulates all worlds by his powers, is one only ; the wise do not acknowledge a second.”

“यः कारणनि निविलानि तानि

कालाक्षयुक्तान्यधितिष्ठत्येकः ॥”      Sweta. U. I. 3.

“Who, one only, regulates all those causes including time and Self.”

“य एकोऽवर्णो बहुधा शक्तियोगात् वर्णाननेकान्निहितार्थो दधाति ।  
विचैति चान्ते विश्वमादी स देवः म नो बुद्धा शुभया संयुनक्तु ॥”

Sweta. U. IV. 1.

“He, without any colour, who with set purpose by means of his power (*Sakti*) produces endless colours, in whom all this comes together in the beginning, and comes asunder in the end—may he, the god, endow us with good thoughts.”

This one ultimate Reality is declared to be the indwelling spirit pervading the entire Universe.

“य देवोऽग्नौ योऽध्यु यो विश्वं भुवनमाविवेश ।

य ओषधौषु यो वनस्पतिषु तस्मै देवाय नमो नमः ॥”

Sweta. U. II. 17.

“The God who is in fire, who is in water, who interpenetrates the whole world, who is in herbs, who is in big trees,—to that God I bow again and again.”

The Swetaswatara Upanishad specifies the manner in which the One God dwells in the entire Universe.

“तिलेषु तैलं दधिनीव सर्पिरापः स्रोतःस्वरणौषु चाम्बिः ।

एवमात्मानि गृह्णतेऽसौ सत्येनैनं तपसा योऽनुपश्यति ॥”

Sweta. U. I. 15.

“As oil is found in linseeds, butter in curd, water in river-beds, (full of sand), so, he, who seeks the Self with truth, and austerities, finds it in himself.”

A very important feature of the Swetaswatara is that it is fully acquainted with most of the subtle speculations of the later Hindu thought.

There are unmistakable traces in the *Swetaswatara* of a close acquaintance with and even of an attempt at reconciliation of the ideas, which, in later speculations, were formulated in the *Sankhya* and *Yoga* philosophy as in the verse already quoted. *Sweta. U. VI. 10.*

The dualism of *Sankhya*, if not quite established, is already visible in the *Swetaswatara*. The well-known verse of the *Rig-Veda*, making the individual soul an equal partner with the supreme soul, has been adopted by the *Swetaswatara*.

द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं दृक्तं परिषस्तजते ।  
तयोरन्यः पिपलं स्वाद्वत्तनश्चन्नयो अभिचाकशीति ॥

*Rig. I. 164. 21. and Sweta. IV. 6.*

"Two birds, inseparable friends, cling to the same tree. One of them eats the sweet fruit while the other looks on without eating."

Moreover, the individual soul is spoken of as unborn.

"ज्ञान्नौ द्वावजावोशानीशौ ।" *Sweta. U. I. 9.*

"There are two, one knowing (*Iswara*), the other not-knowing (*Jiva*), both unborn."

The *Sankhya* doctrine of God or *Purusha*, being only the witness and not the actor, is also to be found in germ, in the *Swetaswatara Upanishad*.

As in the *Sankhya* system God is spoken of as the भौता (the strong).

Finally, Kapila the reputed propounder of the *Sankhya* philosophy, is mentioned by name,

"कृष्णं प्रसूतम् कपिलम् यस्तमये ।" *Sweta. U. V. 2.*

Some commentators including Sankara have interpreted *Kapilam* as red. But that is far-fetched and forced. Rishi Kapila clearly refers to the founder of the *Sankhya* system. We can well understand San-

kara's unwillingness to admit the mention of the founder of a rival system in the Upanishad.

Similarly, the traces of the influence of Yoga philosophy in the Swetaswatara Upanishad are unmistakable. The word Yoga and its derivatives are of frequent occurrence throughout the Swetaswatara Upanishad.

यदात्मतच्चेन तु ब्रह्मतच्चम्  
दीपोपमेनेह युक्तः प्रपश्येत् ।

Sweta. U. II. 15.

"When one practising Yoga truly sees Brahma by seeing himself as one sees objects by a lamp."

तस्याभिष्ठानात् योजनात् तत्त्वभावात्  
भूयश्चान्ते विश्वमायानिवृत्तिः ॥

Sweta. U. I. 10.

"By meditation, by Yoga, and unity with him the world illusion is, at the end, completely removed."

Not only Yoga in the general sense, but Yoga of a technical nature seems to have been already developed when the Swetaswatara was composed. In later times by the practice of Yoga various supernatural powers were said to be developed. In the Swetaswatara Upanishad, we find the beginnings of such developments. They say, that lightness, health, freedom from avarice, brightness of colour, sweetness of tone, a pleasant scent, and the smallness of excretions, are the first results of Yoga.

“लघुत्वमारोग्यमलोलुपत्वं वर्णप्रसादः स्वरसीष्टवं च ।

गन्धः शुभो मूलपुरोषमल्पं योगप्रवृत्तिं प्रथमां वदन्ति ॥

Sweta. U. II. 13.

It is also said, that in the practice of Yoga phantoms of mist, smoke, the sun, air, fire, fire-flies, lightning, crystal and the moon, arise as premonitions of the revelation of the Brahman.

“नौहारध मार्कानलानिलानं  
खद्योतविद्यु तस्माटिकश्चिनाम् ।  
एतानि रूपाणि पुरःसराणि  
ब्रह्मरथभित्तिकराणि योगे ॥ Sweta. U. II. 11.

Detailed instructions regarding place and posture of practising Yoga are also to be found, in the Swetaswatarā :

ममे शुचौ शक्तरवड्हिवालुका-  
विवर्जिते शब्दजलाशयादिभिः ।  
मनोऽनुकुले न तु चक्षुपौडने  
गुह्यनिवाताश्चयणे प्रयोजयेत् ॥ Sweta. U. II, 10.

“One should practise Yoga, in a clear and level place, free from pebbles, fire and sand, favourable to the mind, owing to the presence of sound, water-shed, and other things and not painful to the eyes, adjacent to a cave and guarded from the winds ”

As regards the posture it is enjoined, that while practising Yoga, one should keep, his chest, neck and head in a straight line with his body elevated. (Sweta. U. II. 8).

Such passages, clearly show, that the Sankhya and Yoga philosophy has already made considerable progress. This does not mean, that the existing treatises on Sankhya and Yoga had been written. They undoubtedly are of later origin, but it is probable that the schools of thought, which, produced these works in later times had already come into existence.

Another mark, of the later origin of the Swetaswatara Upanishad is to be found in the conception and the name of God as the Supreme Reality in it. The well-known idea of God being the One Indwelling Presence,

no doubt kept in tact in the Swetaswatara. But the God has become more personal in the Swetaswatara Upanishad. He is frequently spoken in the masculine. The terms Brahman and Atman have become rarer. The term that is mostly used, with reference to Ultimate Reality is Deva. Still more significant is the use of the words, Rudra and Hara, as names of God,—terms which came into vogue in a later stage of development of Hindu thought and which are not to be found throughout the genuine Upanishadic literature. It is also to be noted that the Swetaswatara Upanishad is not satisfied with mere knowledge of God, but insists on devotion to Him. In the Upanishadic period, knowledge of God was considered sufficient for the Supreme Beatitude. Again and again it has been declared in the Upanishads, that by knowing the Brahman, one attains immortality. But the Swetaswatara demands devotion to God in addition to knowledge.

**“अत्रान्तरं ब्रह्मविदो विदिता**

**लोना ब्रह्मणि तत्परा योनिमुक्ताः ॥”** Sweta. U. I. 7.

“They who know Brahman, and are devoted to Him, are freed from reincarnation ; by knowing Him, they transcend the world.”

Here we find, that one must be devoted to Him as well as know Him. Similarly the doctrine of Grace or Mercy has made its appearance in the Swetaswatara Upanishad. Such phrases as ‘grace of God’ (**धातुःप्रसादः**) are of frequent occurrence in the Swetaswatara Upanishad.

It is evident, in the Swetaswatara Upanishad that we are already on the threshold of the Bhakti movement, which became fully developed in the Post-Budhistic times.

Indeed, in the concluding verse of the *Swetaswatara* *Upanishad* not only devotion (*Bhakti*) to God, is definitely mentioned by name but also *Bhakti* to *Guru* was enjoined, —an idea which was very common and wide-spread in the later mediæval Hinduism.

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## AN ESTIMATE OF THE UPANISHADS.

We have now examined the more important and authentic Upanishads and we are in a position to estimate their place and value in the religious evolution in India. It can justly be said that they constitute a glorious chapter in the Religious literature not only of India but of humanity. The authors of these remarkable books have ventured to ask the most daring questions and to discuss the most penetrating problems and the fundamental realities of the universe, and they have arrived at the conclusion which is of permanent interest and abiding value to seekers after truth of all ages and all countries.

Analysing the constitution of the universe, more particularly the marvels of the human mind, the Upanishads have arrived at the truth that there is One Eternal, All-pervading, Indwelling Reality, which they call the *Atman*, the Self or Spirit and the *Brahman* the Great or the Infinite. Behind the bewildering mass of phenomena of most diverse nature, the Upanishads have seen one fundamental Reality. “एको वशी सर्वभूतान्तराला एकं रूपं बहुधा यः करोति ।” Kathopanishad V. 12. “The one ruler who is the Inner Self of all beings who makes manifold the one form.”

“एको हि रुद्रो न हितौयाय तस्य-  
र्य इमाँक्षीकानीश्वत ईशनौभिः ।  
प्रत्युज्जनास्तिष्ठति संचुकोपान्तकाले  
संसूच्य विश्वा भुवनानि गोपाः ॥” Sweta. U. III. 2.

“There is one Rudra only ; they do not allow a second, who rules this world by his might. He

exists behind all persons, and after having created the whole universe, He preserves them and draws them together at the end of time."

Here we have a most comprehensive synthesis ever reached by human thought. It is the One Reality who is in fire and water, who dwells in the whole universe. "यो देवोऽमौ योऽस्मु यो विष्णु भुवनमाविवेश । य शिवधीषु यो वग्नस्तिषु तस्मै देवाय नमो नमः ॥" Sweta. U. II. 17.

It is this One Power which moves and guides the sun, the moon and the stars. "भयादस्यानिस्तपति भयाच्चपति सूर्यः । भयादिन्द्रस्यवायुश्च मृत्युर्धावति पञ्चमः ॥" Kathopanishad. II. 3. 3.

"The sun shinest out of fear for Him ; the fire burneth out of fear ; Indra, Vayu, and Death the fifth, move out of fear."

This All-pervading Reality dwells in the soul of all. He is the indwelling presence. "ओदस्य ओतं मनसो मनो यदाचो ह वाचए स उ प्राणस्य प्राणस्तुष्टुष्टुः ।" Kenopanishad. I. 2. "He is the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, the speech of speech. He is the life of life, the eye of the eye."

But the most intimate knowledge of Him, is when we know Him as the Soul of our soul. "तमात्मस्य येऽनुपश्यन्ति धीरस्तेषाएऽ शान्तिः शास्त्रौ नेतरेषां ।" Kathopanishad. V. 13. "The wise who see him as dwelling in our soul, theirs is the abiding peace and not of any one else."

"यसु सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मन्येवानुपश्यति ।

सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं ततो न विजुगुप्तस्ते ॥ Isopanishad 6.

"He who sees all things in the self and self in all things, does not keep himself aloof, for that reason."

This conception of God as the Indwelling presence in everything, which has been called the immanent conception in the modern philosophical phraseology, may be

said to be the predominant feature of the Upanishads. It is really remarkable how this idea, which is beginning to be realised only recently by Western thinkers, was so firmly grasped by the sages of the Upanishad.

The Upanishads most emphatically repudiate all physical representations of the ultimate reality which they call the Spirit.

**“न संदृश्य तिष्ठति रूपमस्य**

**न चक्षुषा पश्यति कश्चनैन।”** Kathopanishad VI. 9.

“His form is not manifest to eyes. No one can see him with the eyes.”

**“न चक्षुषा गृह्णाते नापि वाचा नान्यदेवैस्तुपसा कर्मणा वा।”**

Mundak. III. i. 8.

“He cannot be reached by the eyes, nor by words, nor by the other senses, nor can he be obtained by asceticism or by sacrificial deeds.”

The Supreme Spirit is beyond the reach of the senses. Even the mind cannot grasp. Speech with mind came back baffled in the attempt to reach Him.  
**यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते अप्राप्य मनसा सह—Taittiriya U. II. 4.**

He is the Infinite beyond the reach of the senses and the mind.

**“न तत्र चक्षुर्गच्छति न वाग् गच्छति नो मनो  
न विद्वा न विजानीमो यथेतद्गुणिषात्।”**

Kenopanishad I. 3.

“The eye does not go there, neither the speech, nor the mind. We do not know it. We do not know how to impart instruction about it.” **“अन्यदेव तद्विदितादद्यो अविदितादधि”** Kenopanishad I. 3. “He is the other than from what we know and from what we do not know.”

In the Upanishads the Supreme Spirit is often indicated by negatives.

“अस्युलमनयवङ्गस्यमदौर्ध्वमतोहितमस्येहमस्यायमतमोऽवाद्यनाकाशमसङ्गमरसमगच्छमवक्षुष्मश्रोत्रमवागमनोऽतेजस्यमप्राणमसुखममात्रम् ।” Brihadaranyakopanishad III. viii. 8.

“He is neither coarse nor fine, neither short nor long, nor red, not moist, neither shadow, nor darkness, neither air, nor ether, without attachment, without taste, without smell, without eye, without ear, without speech, without name, without light, without mouth, without life. He cannot be compared to anything.”

Indeed some of the Upanishads emphatically declared that the Brahman can only be defined as *not this, not that* “स एष नेति नेत्यात्मा अगृह्णते” Bri. U. IV. ii. 4.

That incomprehensible Brahman can be defined only as “not this, not that.” The Upanishads have been most deeply impressed by the infinitude of the ultimate reality. In indicating this aspect of the infinitude of the Supreme Spirit the Upanishads verge on the agnosticism of modern time. But yet it is not agnosticism. Though fully realising incomprehensibility of the Supreme Spirit, they emphatically repudiate the craveness of the modern agnosticism

“जाहं मन्ये सुविदेति यो न विदेति वेद च”

Kenopanishad II. 2.

“I do not think that I have known God well. It is not that I do not know Him nor is it that I know Him.” That is the prevailing attitude of the Upanishads towards the important questions of the knowledge of God.

“यस्यामते तस्य मते मते यस्य न वेद सः

अविज्ञातं विज्ञानतां विज्ञातमविज्ञानताम् ।” Kenopanishad II. 3.

"He who thinks that he has not known God, has really known Him. On the other hand, he who thinks that he has known Him really does not know Him. The truly wise person thinks that he has not known God, but he, who is not so wise, thinks that he has known God."

"यदि मन्यसे सुविदेति इभमेवापि नूनं तं वेत्य ब्रह्मणो रूपम् ।"

Kenopanishad II. 1.

"If you think 'that I know God well' then surely you know very little of the nature of God."

This is a perfectly legitimate and profoundly thoughtful view of the fundamental question of the knowledge of God. Here we have an emphatic assurance of the possibility of the knowledge of God tempered with reverence and awe at the Majesty of His Infinitude. Herein we cannot but be impressed by the superiority of the Upanishads over the agnostic literature of the modern times. The Upanishads teach *Brahma Jnana* (ब्रह्मज्ञान) knowledge of God, though they tremble at the grandeur and majesty of the Infinite.

Answering the possibility of the knowledge of God, the Upanishads have tried to indicate at great length the process by which that knowledge can be attained. At the outset it has been declared emphatically that God cannot be known by mere learning and erudition. "नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना शुतेन ।" Mundakopanishad. III. ii. 3. "The Self cannot be attained by teaching, nor by intellect, nor by much hearing".

Next it is stipulated that unless the heart has been purified, the senses restrained and disciplined, God cannot be known by mere intellectual process.

“नाविरतो दुष्करिताचाशान्तो नासमाहितः  
नाशान्तमानसी वापि प्रज्ञानेनमामृयत् ।”

Kathopanishad. I. ii. 23.

Turning to the positive side, the Upanishads declare that God can be known by the practice of truth, self-discipline and perfect knowledge.

“सत्येन सम्यक्षपसा हेतुप आत्मा  
सम्यग् ज्ञानेन ब्रह्मचर्यं नित्यम् ।”

Mundakopanishad III. i. 5.

Great stress is laid by the sages of the Upanishads on *Tapas* ( तपस् ) as a means of attaining God.

“तपसा ब्रह्म विजिज्ञासस्त्” Taittiriya Upanishad III. 2.

What exactly was meant by *Tapas* is not quite clear. In later times *Tapas* meant bodily mortification and asceticism, but in the Upanishads it leaned more towards earnest thought and meditation. The final and essential condition of God-vision was undoubtedly purification of heart. All other qualifications were only means to that end. It is only the pure in heart who can expect to have God-vision.

“ज्ञानप्रसादेन विशुद्धसत्त्व-  
स्तात्मु तं पश्यते निकलं ध्यायमानः ।”

Mundakopanishad III. i. 8.

“One whose inmost self has been purified by complete knowledge sees the Holy one in meditation.” Herein the Upanishads and the Gospel are in complete agreement. Jesus, the founder of Christianity, declared “Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.” Some centuries before that the sages of the Upanishads taught the same truth, even in a more emphatic language.

There is a curious passage found both in the Katha

and Mundakopanishad which would seem to anticipate the Christian doctrine of Election.

“यमैवैष द्वयुते तेन लभ्यः  
तमैवैष आत्मा द्वयुते तनुं स्वां ॥”

Kathopanishad I. ii. 23.

“Whomsoever he elects, by him He is attainable. The spirit elects him as his own body.” Here it would seem that attainment of God does not depend on the merit of the exertions of the devotee, but is the free gift of God. He gives it to whomsoever He chooses. Here we have the genesis of the doctrine of grace or divine mercy which is the soul of the Bhakti School in Indian and Christian Theology.

Brahmajnan, Knowledge of God or God-vision is not quite the goal of the Upanishads. It is a means to an end. The final goal, the ultimate object of all spiritual endeavours and exercises, is declared to be अमृतत्वं Immortality. The Upanishads declare again and again by knowing the Brahman, the devotee becomes immortal.

“य एतद्विद्वरमृतास्ते भवन्ति ।” Kathopanishad II. vi. 9.

“Those who know this become immortal.”

“विज्ञास्यैकं परिवेष्टितारमौशं तं ज्ञात्वाऽमृता भवन्ति ।”

Swetaswatara Upanishad III. 7.

“People become immortal by knowing that One All-pervading God.”

“इदा मनोषौ मनसाऽभिवल्लसी य एत द्विद्वरमृतास्ते भवन्ति ।”

Sweta. IV. 17.

“Those, who know that God who is perceived by the heart, the soul, the mind, become immortal.”

“भूतेषु भूतेषु विचित्र्य धौरा:

प्रेत्यात्माज्ञीकादमृता भवन्ति ।” Kenopanishad II. 5.

‘The wise having realised Brahman in all things,

become immortal after their departure from this world."

Thus it is evident that the sages of the Upanishads longed for immortality. Now what is meant by this immortality ? Can it be the overcoming of the mere physical death ? There are some passages which would lead to such a conclusion.

**"तमेवविद्वाऽतिभूल्यमेति"**

Swetaswatra Upanishad III. 8.

"By knowing Him one goes beyond death."

**"निचाय तन्मृल्युमुखात्प्रसुच्यते ।"**

Kathopanishad 1. iii. 15.

"(The worshipper) is delivered from the mouth of death knowing that (unchangeable)." But the sages of the Upanishads were too deep and wise to take such passages in the superficial sense of overcoming physical death. On the other hand there are unmistakable indications to the contrary. There are passages which say that even in this life one could enjoy immortality."

**"स स्वर्युपाशान् पुरतः प्रणीय  
शोकातिगो मोहते स्वर्गलोके ।"**

Kathopanishad I. i. 18.

"He, having broken the fetters of death even before the destruction of the body, becomes free from sorrow and rejoices in heaven."

Again some passages indicate that the immortality is to be gained only after death. "**प्रेत्याक्षालोकादसुता  
भवति ।**" Kenopanished II. 5. "Having departed from this world they attain immortality."

Thus it is not quite clear what the sages of the Upanishads meant by becoming immortal. In later Hinduism the goal of spiritual culture was definitely under-

stood to be liberation from the circle of life and death. After death the soul was believed to be reborn in some world according to the merits and demerits of the previous life. Thus there was an interminable round of life and death from which the devotee would be liberated. In the Upanishads we find fore-shadowings of this theory. “स तु तत्पदमाप्नोति यस्माद्यो न जायते।” Kathopanishad I. iii. 8. “One attains that place from which one is not born again.”

“अयं लोको नास्ति पर इति मानी

युनः पुनः वशमापद्यते मे।” Kathopanishad I. ii. 6.

“One, who thinks that this world alone exists and there is no future world, comes under my sway again and again.”

But the belief in rebirth and the desire for liberation from it had not been quite definite in the Upanishads. The immortality for which the sages of the Upanishads yearn was a state of peace and bliss

“विश्वस्यैकं परिवेष्टितारं

ज्ञात्वा शिवं शान्तिमत्यन्तमेति।” Sweta IV. 14.

“Man attains supreme place by knowing that immortal one, the support of the universe, the one beneficent God.”

Those who knew God, theirs was eternal happiness.

“तेषां सुखं शाश्वतं नेतरेषां।” Kathopanishad II. v. 12.

“They obtain everlasting happiness, and not of others.”  
Kathopanishad II. ii. 12.

“स यो हृ वै तत् परमं ब्रह्म वेद ब्रह्मैव भवति

नास्यान्नद्विद्वा कुले भवति।

तरति श्रीकं तरति पाप्मानं

गुह्यायन्विभरो विसुलोऽनृतो भवति॥”

Mundakopanishad III. ii. 9.

“Verily, he who knows the Supreme Brahman,

becomes Brahman in truth. In his family no one is born who does not know Brahman. He passes beyond sorrow, he passes beyond sin. Freed from the knots of the heart, he becomes immortal."

The Upanishads are pervaded by this idea :

By knowing the eternal God the devotee finds delight of his soul. He rises above sorrow and sin. He is freed from the fetters of the heart.

Thus the immortality of the Upanishads, whatever it may or may not mean, is rising above sorrow, suffering, and sin and dwelling in eternal peace and happiness in the company of God who is Bliss.

Such in brief is the teaching of the Upanishads deeply philosophical and much inspiring. Here we have a system of knowledge and devotion, sublime and profound. It is to be regretted that the Upanishads have not been more widely known among the nations of the world. When properly understood the Upanishads are sure to be cherished as the most precious legacy of humanity.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

### THE SCHOOLS OF PHILOSOPHY.

A few words on the Schools of philosophy will be appropriate here. For, philosophy in India had its origin and inspiration in, and aimed to serve the interests of, religion. The avowed object of philosophy was the same as that of religion viz., to remove the extreme suffering of humanity ; and the Schools of philosophy, especially, the Vedanta, had a considerable influence on all subsequent religious systems of India.

It was in the speculations of the Upanishads that the systems of philosophy had their origin, though they might have taken their present shape at a considerably later time. The Upanishads were not one consistent system of philosophy. They are glimpses of spiritual vision, intuitive guesses at truths by seers ; but in them are to be found the germs of most of the systems of philosophies that have subsequently developed. All the schools of Indian philosophy tried to base their respective systems on the authority of the Upanishads. The period following the Upanishads was an age of intense, though not original, intellectual stir. It would seem that a host of thinkers busied themselves in working upon and systematizing the pregnant thoughts thrown out in the Upanishads. Thus we find that at the time of the Buddha, there were many confusing systems of philosophy ; the Brahmajala Sutra mentions sixty-two of them which the Buddha is said to have

refuted ; and the Jaina scriptures mention even a larger number. There can be no doubt that at the time of the birth of the Buddha, many schools of philosophy had developed in India, the most important of which have survived and were subsequently known as the Nyaya, the Vaise-shikha, the Sankhya, the Yoga, the Vedanta and the Mimamsa philosophies.

For our present purpose it is not necessary to enter into any detailed account of these philosophies. It will be sufficient to indicate in a brief outline their association with, and influence on the course of religious development. We have already said that they had their origin in the pregnant intuitive truths of the Upanishads. It would seem that at least some of them had received definite form and name before the close of the age of the Upanishads. Thus we have seen that the Swetha-swatara Upanishad mentions two of them, the Sankhya and the Yoga by name.

It would be an interesting study to trace the development of the different Schools of philosophy from the time of the Upanishads, though materials for such a study are not quite available. We, at any rate, cannot undertake it now. It is not possible also to determine the chronological order of their development.

The most important of the Schools of philosophy was undoubtedly the Vedanta. It had its origin in an effort to bring out a system of consistent theory of God, man and the universe out of the existing Upanishads. It is natural that thinkers and admirers of the Upanishads would try to formulate a consistent philosophy for the Upanishads. This they succeeded in doing by piecing together some of the characteristic ideas of the

**Upanishads.** A very interesting treatise is in existence which is known as the Brahmasutra. It is traditionally attributed to Vyasa and is also called the Vyasa-sutra. Vyasa however is only a mythical name. At any rate it cannot be the work of the Vyasa who is traditionally known as the editor of the Vedas or the author of the Mahabharata. It is with greater probability attributed to one Badarayana. The date of its composition is likewise uncertain. But it may be fairly placed between the first half of the first century B. C. and second part of the second century B. C. Its Sutra form proves that the school of thought formulated in it had been in existence for some time past. It purports to be a digest of the philosophy of the Upanishads. But the Upanishads, as we have said, do not contain one consistent philosophy. There are diverse and varying tendencies of thought in the Upanishads which were developed and formed into diverse Schools of philosophy. But the Vedanta philosophy can fairly claim to represent the preponderant tendency in the Upanishads. The Brahmasutra is however so brief and enigmatical that it is difficult to understand its meaning without the help of a commentary ; and a number of commentaries have been written on it which give diametrically opposite interpretations of the text.

The most important of these is that associated with the name of Sankara, the great philosopher of the 8th Century, A. D. Sankara interpreted the Brahmasutra as an extreme monistic system in which there is only one undifferentiated reality, all diversity being only an illusion. The Monistic or Advaita Philosophy of Sankara has had a wide prevalence in India, owing to the brilliant

dialectic skill of its author. As a School of philosophy it is very remarkable. But it is very doubtful if it interprets the underlying ideas of the Brahmasutra correctly. There are other and earlier commentators who saw a dualistic or modified dualistic philosophy in the Brahmasutra. The Bhagvat Gita, which professes to give expression to the same views as those of the Brahmasutra, is dualistic,—at least it is far from the monism of Sankara. Sankara was not the founder of the school. Possibly the original exponent of this school was Gaudapada who seems to have been a remarkable man and an original thinker. Sankara speaks very highly of him. He was the preceptor of Govinda who was the preceptor of Sankara himself. It is significant that Sankara refers to Gaudapada and not to Badarayana the origin of his philosophy. Gaudapada did not write any commentary on the Brahmasutra, but propounded his system as a commentary on the Mandukya Upanishad, which is one of the smallest and less important Upanishads. Sankara however tried to associate the Monistic Philosophy of Gaudapada with the Brahmasutra by writing an elaborate commentary on it, which remains a most authoritative exposition of the school.

The Vedanta Philosophy in all its forms admitted but one ultimate reality. But the Sankhya Philosophy in direct opposition to it asserted two ultimate realities—the *Purusha* and the *Prakriti*. The Purushas are many. But their exact nature and functions are not clear. The whole existence is the outcome of the interaction of the Purusha and Prakriti. The Vedanta postulated only one ultimate Reality, the universe being either illusion or a derivative, dependent existence on the

Supreme reality. The Sankhya on the other hand declares that both Purusha and Prakriti are independent realities and does not believe in any God. The nature of the Prakriti is also not easy to understand. Though it is called an ultimate and independent reality, it is said to be made up of the three Gunas — *Sattva, Rajas, Tamas*. The Prakriti is the equilibrium stage of the three Gunas. Before the creation, there was only Prakriti in which the Guna-compounds had disintegrated into a state of dissolution and had by their mutual opposition produced an equilibrium which was Prakriti. When this state of equilibrium was disturbed the various existences were produced by the unequal distribution of the Gunas. At dissolution the Gunas again entered into a stage of equilibrium and all existence was dissolved into the original Prakriti. But it is not clear why or how the Prakriti should be disturbed. It is postulated that the Prakriti or the sum-total of the Gunas is so connected with the Purushas, and there is such an inherent teleology or blind purpose in the lifeless Prakriti, that all its evolutions and transformations take place for the sake of the diverse Purushas to serve the enjoyment of pleasures and sufferances of pain through experiences, and finally leading them to absolute freedom or Mukti.

We need not enter into any detailed analysis of the Sankhya conception of creation which is very complicated. The most interesting part of the Sankhya philosophy for our present purpose is its total rejection of any theory about God, Brahman or Iswar. Yet it was held in high esteem even by the orthodox Hindu. The traditional founder of the Sankhya philosophy,

Kapila, was even included among the incarnations of Vishnu.

The Yoga School was very similar to the Sankhya in its philosophical ideas. Only it superadded an Iswara or God. It has therefore been called a theistic or *Seswar* Sankhya. Its peculiarity consists however in its system of discipline for the tranquility of the mind. It has elaborated a complete system of mental discipline. As a system of practical discipline it had wide influence in India. Many devotees have practised the Yoga discipline and are supposed to have developed wonderful psychical and spiritual powers. The traditional founder of the Yoga School is Patanjali about whose date and identity there is a considerable difference of opinion. There was a Patanjali who wrote a commentary on the grammar of Panini about the middle of the second century B.C. Some suppose that the founder of the Yoga system is the grammarian Patanjali. But others doubt it.

The Nyaya and Vaisesika Schools are very similar in their philosophical views. They are still more realistic in their conception. The Vedanta postulated only one Ultimate Reality, the Sankhya and Yoga two, but the Nyaya and Vaisesika admit at least nine which they call the *Padarthas* or substances, besides Iswara. The *Padarthas* are—earth, water, fire, air, space, time, directions (*dik*), soul, mind.

The Nyaya and Vaisesika philosophies are based on experience. They believe in the eternity of atoms of the four elements (the *Bhutas*) the earth, water, fire, air. They also believe in the reality of time and space. They postulate a separate Soul (Atma) for every person;

the qualities of knowledge, feelings of pleasure and pain, desire etc. belong to Atma.

The Vaisesika philosophy has specially developed the atomic theory of creation, whereas the Naya philosophy is well-known for its theory of knowledge. Like other systems their final aim is salvation. According to them salvation is attained by true knowledge of the *Padarthas*. The bondage of the world is due to false knowledge. When true knowledge is obtained re-birth ceases and the Soul attains liberation.

The reputed founder of the Naya School is Gautama, about whom very little is known. He is said to have flourished in 6th century B.C. The Vaisesika system which is attributed to Kanada is said to have been even earlier. But these dates are very problematic.

The remaining of the six systems of philosophy viz., the Mimamsa or Purva Mimamsa in contradiction to Uttar Mimamsa, as the Vedanta Philosophy is sometimes called, is not of much importance as a philosophy. It is only a practical system of interpretation about the meaning and rationale of the many intricacies of sacrificial rituals which had gradually grown up in connection with the Vedic scriptures. Its chiet interest was in the Vedas and everything else was subordinated to the authority of the Vedas. The Vedas were eternal ; and in order to secure the eternity of Vedas, it even denied the existence of God. It believed in Soul, otherwise who would perform the sacrifice ? The Salvation according to the Mimamsa in common with the other philosophies and universal Hindu conception is cessation from re-birth, and is brought about when a man having enjoyed the fruits of his action, good or bad

exhausts them and stops the further generation of new results by abstaining from performance of Karma. This salvation is obtained at the dissolution of the body and non-production of a new body. In contrast to all other philosophies, the Mimamsa does not believe in any reaction or dissolution as that would militate against the eternity of Vedas. According to Mimamsa *Sabda* was the main proof of knowledge. All systems of Indian philosophy, except Jain, Buddhist, Charvak and Vaisesik, admitted *Sabda* as a source of knowledge, but the Mimamsa laid the greatest emphasis on it. The *Sabda* of course meant pre-eminently the Vedas. Connected with this is the doctrine of the self-validity of knowledge. The Mimamsa philosophy declares that all knowledge carries its certainty with itself, and does not require any extraneous proof. Even the Naya philosophy does not insist on this objective validity of knowledge. According to the Naya, knowledge has a subjective validity, that is to say, under certain conditions a piece of knowledge is produced in us. But there is no guarantee that this knowledge has any reality in the external world. But the Mimamsa represents the extreme realistic position that all knowledge is objectively valid.

The Mimamsa Sutras are generally attributed to Jaimini who is believed to have lived in 2nd Century B. C. But there can be no doubt that there had been many other exponents before and Jaimini was one of the many ; and perhaps Jaimini's work was so comprehensive and satisfactory that it suppressed all others.

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